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ABSTRACT

The 15 articles in this issue of "Reading in Virginia" focus on various aspects of reading instruction. Topics of the articles are an analysis of American Indian dialect and its implications for the reading curriculum, community involvement, 13 basic words, kinesics and reading, a psycholinguistic perspective of reading problems, how parents can help their children read, Virginia's commitment to the gifted, the problem of pressure on children, magic and motivation in better reading, the effects of teachers' response strategies on children's oral reading performance, modality preferences and reading achievement, teaching reading in the content areas, two Virginia State Reading Association teachers of the year, and a workshop for parents to learn how to help their children learn. (JM)

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J. Lee Pemberton, III, Editor
Dr. Robert D. Gibbons, Assistant Editor

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLES:

A Capsule Analysis of American Indian Dialect and the Implications it Presents Upon the Reading Curriculum
Mrs. Grace E. Hayes 1

Reading Fair: A Way to Community Involvement
Mrs. Marty Rourke 6

Some Very Basic Words
Mr. Jerry L. Johns 8

Kinesics and Reading
Joyce A. Habel
Dr. Samuel Tilden Habel 9

Reading Problems: A Psycholinguistic Perspective
Dr. Brenda V. Smith 11

What Parents Can Do to Help Their Children Read
Dr. Joseph B. Carnot
Mr. Ronald L. Magin 13

Virginia's Commitment to the Gifted
Mrs. Isabelle P. Rucker 14

Pressure: A Problem Facing Reading Teachers
Dr. L. D. Briggs 20

Keys to Better Reading - Magic and Motivation
Mrs. Jennie J. DeGenaro
Dr. Morton Bradman 22

Effects of Teachers Response Strategies on Children's Oral Reading Performance: A Case of Interference?
Dr. Jerome A. Niles
Dr. John C. Winstead
Dr. Richard T. Graham 25

Modality Preferences and Reading Achievment A Review
Dr. Thomas Cioer 28

Effective Teaching of Reading in the Content Areas ERIC/RCS Review
Dr. William H. Rupley 30

Kathleen Dowdy
Newport News Public Schools
VSRA Teacher of the Year
Mrs. Ruth Hawkins 33

Marjorie L. Lee
Norfolk Public Schools
VSRA Teacher of the Year
Mrs. Susan Matthews 35

H.E.L.P.
Home Education Learning Power
Aileen Lipton 36

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On September 8, 1976, the Virginia State Reading Association received a Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Contribution to the Development of Literacy in the United States. The certificate was presented to VSRA by the Department of Health Education and Welfare and the National Right to Read Effort. I was indeed proud to accept the certificate for VSRA since the only other reading council so honored was the International Reading Association.

Congratulations are in order to Anne Henry, VSRA membership chairperson, and to all local council membership chairpersons for an outstanding job. The increase in membership for the 1976-77 year was 908 new members which brings our total membership to 5,073 as of January 8, 1977. I would suspect that other than the Virginia Education Association, this makes us the largest education-related group in Virginia!

By the time you read this issue of the Journal, the State Conference scheduled for March 17-19 at Roanoke will be a reality. Dr. Robert Gibbons, President-Elect, VSRA, and the conference planning committee deserve a lot of credit for putting together an outstanding program for us. As you probably realize, these conferences don't just happen or fall in place by themselves. They happen because lots of dedicated people are willing to spend many long hours, without reimbursement, to insure success.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all the local council officers for presenting outstanding programs to the community and members. I have had the opportunity to be present at many of these conferences and have found that without exception, they have been excellent. This also indicates to me that we in Virginia have reason to be proud of the local leadership in reading. In my travels throughout the State this year, I have consistently been impressed with the talent and capability of Virginia reading teachers and administrators.

Congratulations to our two Outstanding Teaching of Reading in Virginia award recipients for the 1976-77 school year. Kathleen Dowdy of the Newport News Council and Marjorie Lee from the Norfolk Council were selected from among many outstanding nominees and will receive invitations to attend the VSRA conference at Roanoke with all expenses paid by VSRA. I also offer my congratulations to all those teachers who were nominated for these awards. The selection of only two from among so many is very difficult.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the publishing companies and their representatives in Virginia for their continued support of our organization. Without the exhibits and speakers provided by these companies we would have a difficult time implementing both our State and local conferences.

The Board of Directors has been hard at work this year. We have tried to not only obtain our goal but also make the state council one that provides both leadership and service to our local councils. The changes that we will ask you to approve in our by-laws and the changes that we have made through regular meetings of the Board of Directors will strengthen our organization so that we may provide even better services to you in the future.

I have very much enjoyed this year as your President. It has been a good year for reading in Virginia despite budget problems. I know that you will continue to give the same kind of support to our next president, Dr. Robert Gibbons, as he assumes the duties on July 1, 1977. Thank you very much for making my tenure a pleasant one.

James D. Mullins
President
Virginia State Reading Association

A CAPSULE ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN INDIAN DIALECT AND THE IMPLICATIONS IT PRESENTS UPON THE READING CURRICULUM

Mrs. Grace E. Hayes
Reading Specialist
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As some say, it is the "First American," the Indian, who has been done the most injustice in the area of education. Not only by biased texts, but also by inappropriate teaching, has the Indian found a difficult time for himself in most of our classrooms. This article will present an overview of Indian dialect as well as some activities and sources for reading teachers of Indian children.

An Overview of Selected Indian Dialects

At the time of Columbus's landing in America, approximately 1,150,000 aboriginal Americans lived here. They spoke an astonishing number of languages. Only a handful of individuals speak these languages today. Sioux and Navajo are still flourishing, although the languages differ from each other in vocabulary, phonetics, and grammatical form. They consist of a number of distinct stocks.[1]

More than 600 native groups comprise the Indian population. These 600 native groups have 200-300 different languages. They bear no relationship to one another; there exists no common language.[2]

Cherokee Alphabet. A man by the name of George Guess, also known as Sequoyah, wanted to develop something in the Cherokee language for his people. Referred to as an "illiterate Indian genius," Guess endowed a whole tribe with learning. He conceived and perfected an alphabet or syllabary.

The alphabet he devised has eighty-six characters. He divided words into parts or syllables. The purpose of the alphabet was to make his people better understood like the white man when he wrote a letter. The alphabet was never taught in schools; the Indians learned it from one another as they had no books.

Guess was regarded as foolish when he conceived the idea of a Cherokee alphabet. Eventually, primers, spelling books, annual almanacs, passages from the scriptures, catechisms, hymn books, laws and the constitution of the Cherokee nation, and current acts of the legislative council were all printed in the "language of Sequoyah."[3]

Navajo Grammar. The chief grammatical devices for expression of ideas in Navajo are the noun and the verb. No grammatical device is employed to indicate either a definite or indefinite article. There is no nominative case and no masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns.

The relationship of a possessive noun is denoted by prefixing a possessive pronoun. Postpositions are added to the noun, not placed before it as our preposition. In Navajo there is no degree comparison.

Not much use is made of figures except in paper currency, cards, or money values of checks and trade slips. There are no measure, weight, and time figures. A chronolical record of years is not kept. It is not customary to compute a man's age.

Most Navajos distinguish two seasons, winter and summer. The months and days are not numbered. Rather, the time of day is told by the sun. The Navajo day is as long as there is light or sun. There is no week.

In the Navajo dialect, there are many Navajo adverbs. The most common way to indicate an adverb is to add "go" to any part of speech.

The Navajo verb is crammed with details. Other languages in contrast have auxiliaries, infinitives, prepositions, or adverbial adjuncts to help out. The simplest Navajo verb has three elements: the stem, verb, and modal prefix. In addition, the Navajo verb distinguishes a singular, dual, and plural number for first, second, and third persons. There are three primary tenses, that of future, present, and past. A Navajo infinitive does not occur nor does the language use "may, can, would, should, or must."[4] Imagine the troublespots a child may come across when trying to learn to speak and read English!

Hope Dialect. The Hope verbs have nine voices and three tenses. These verbs have no tenses like ours but have validity forms, aspects, and clause-linkage forms that yield even greater precision of speech.

In English two kinds of nouns denote physical things: individual nouns dencte bodies with definite outlines--tree, stick and mass nouns. In Hopi on the other hand, a formally distinguished class of nouns is present. All nouns have an individual sense and both singular and plural forms. Terms like "summer" and "morning" are not nouns in Hopi but a kind of adverb and are a formal part of speech by themselves.

Hopi has no notion or intuition of time as a smooth flowing continuum. The language contains no words, grammatical forms, constructions, or expressions that refer directly to what we call time. There is no need for such terms which refer to space or time as such.[5]

Problems Indians Face in Today's Classroom

From the previously presented brief look at a few Indian tribes' languages, one can understand the insurmountable problems the Indian faces when trying to learn how to speak English and to learn to read. Not only are all Indian tribes different in their customs and beliefs, but their languages bear little resemblance to one another and even less resemblance to the English language.

The Indian child is involved in being, not becoming. His education as preparation for some future goal is not a realistic motive for him. They rely heavily on nonverbal

means of expression. The Indian child views education as a series of almost unconquerable obstacles which his experiences in life have not equipped him to overcome. He has an extremely low self concept and turns away from education and all it represents to him in terms of conflict.

In addition to physical differences, there are differences in attitudes, ideals, and beliefs which the teacher must understand:

A. more tribe and family oriented.
B. not basically competitive.
C. interest in being, not in becoming; attention is upon the present.
D. no belief in amassing of material wealth--rather they live by a creed that excellence of achievement in whatever one does is most important.
E. language differences.
F. children in Indian society are treated as equals of adults.[6]

Another problem the Indian faces is the stereotyping which is prevalent of Indians. They are treated as in the past, as solemn with little humor, that no-nos of Indian etiquette are pointing and asking for a personal name, that the ultimate accomplishment in the Indian culture was the successful completion of the manhood initiation tests, that massacres were common, and that most Indians were captives of another tribe at sometime or another.[7]

Books stereotype Indians as savage. There are only a small amount of books available that portray the American Indian of the present, but the number is growing as educators become concerned with culturally disadvantaged children of all groups.[8]

The concept of a supreme being is not a feature of the Navajo culture.[9] This is in direct opposition to the way the typical, middle class child is taught. Naturally, the Indian child is faced with a conflict from the way he has been brought up.

The Indian child brings with him a different background of experiences from the "middle class" child. A tradition of Indian eloquence, exceptional listening and memory capacities, and a unique appreciation of relative importance of silence are things that the Indian child has been enriched with as his background of experiences.[10]

Sources and Activities for Teachers of Indian Children

There are a multitude of activities that today's teacher can use to motivate as well as educate Indian children in the classroom. As far as teaching reading, the teacher needs to keep in mind the following recommendations:

1. Identify basic premises of Indian culture.
2. Review and apply teaching strategies applicable to the special instructional problems represented by Indian youth.
3. Recognize individual differences among Indian students. Facilitate the ultimate goals of self-reliance and self-direction.

In a reading program the question becomes one of language. A bilingual approach to reading provides the best incentive to date for the increase in reading achievement among members of a minority group for whom English is a second language. A problem arises with Indian children because of non-verbal communication and expression which has existed for a period of time. The children must be taught to speak their own tongue and read their own language before bilingual materials will be of value to them. Closely supervised training and practice in reading skills are recommended. Word attack skills can be taught to correct mispronunciation and problems with sounds. Vocabulary training is vital to correct misconceptions about the meanings of words. Reading must be limited to those materials with simple concepts.[11]

Texts are important and teachers must watch the kinds of materials that may tend to stereotype. Teachers must recognize that learning styles are different. Material must be geared to meet the learning styles of each individual. Many of the reading problems are present because we have failed to provide children the kind of reading material in which they have an interest. The teacher needs to learn something about the children first. To better understand them, the teacher must capitalize on their strengths.[12]

Again it is recommended that Indian children be encouraged to verbalize their thoughts and feelings. It is felt that oral communication is first in the curriculum for Indian children.

An interest inventory which may be of benefit to teachers is an incomplete sentence type. After children have completed their inventories, they may be instructed to put a special mark beside the sentences they want to keep to themselves. This can help the teacher better understand her children.

Magazines and pictures can be cut by children--favorite pictures and colors, sad and happy events, etc.[13]

Navajo children have vocabulary problems. One suggestion to develop and improve vocabulary has been to have children study words which have an interest for them--items around the house, clothing, etc.[14]

To develop an appreciation of Indian culture, tradition, and heritage, a suggestion would be to present a unit on the contributions of the Indians.

Indians contributed much to American culture like tobacco, potatoes, peanuts. They showed the colonists how to plant and harvest crops. The Indians also gave the lima bean, tomato, navy bean, baked beans. They developed flavorings used in desserts and chocolate, popcorn, crackerjack, and chewing gum. Corn was their greatest gift. Turkey, tobacco which was smoked and chewed, rubber, cotton, coca plant (chewed leaves to relieve pain--result was cocaine), and quinine were also contributions from the Indians. The Indians invented things we use today: tobacco pipe, rubber ball, lacrosse, snowshoe, toboggan, dog sled, parka, and the hammock. The Mayas invented a number system that included zero. The first Europeans used Indian scouts as guides who helped them to "discover" the lands.[15]

The above information can be presented to Indian children or to all children in the classroom. By means of discussion, lectures (depending on age level), and audio visual materials, the Indian can develop a sense of value for his ancestors and their contributions to America.

Sources: Children. **Teachers may want to have copies of the following materials for their students to read and enjoy:**

Armer, Laura A. *Waterless Mountain*. McKay Company. 1931.

Behn, Harry. *Painted Cane*. Harcourt, 1957. An Indian boy searches for a true name.

Benchley, Nathaniel. *Red Fox and His Canoe*. Scholastic Book Services. 1964. Story of an Indian boy and his adventures with the canoe.

Bleeker, Sonia. *Apache Indian*. Morrow. 1951. About the lives, fortunes, and training of the Apaches.

Bleeker, Sonia. *The Cherokee: Indian of the Mountains*. 1952. Story of the Cherokee before and after the white man's coming.

Bleeker, Sonia. *The Story of the Iroquois*. 1950. Examines the Iroquois in detail.

Bleeker, Sonia. *The Navajo*. 1958. Story of a young Navajo boy and difficulties he faces growing up.

Bleeker, Sonia. *Seminole Indians*. 1954. An account of the past and present life of the Seminoles.

Brewster, Ben. *The First Book of Indians*. Watts, Inc. 1963. Describes way in which American Indians once lived.

Cahn, Edgar S. ed. *Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America*. World Publications, 1969. Studies the plight of today's Indian American in education, health, land, and economics.

Carter, E. Russell. *The Gift is Rich*. Friendship. 1955. Descriptions of Indian groups to American culture.

Collier, John. *Indians of the Americas: The Long Hope*. Norton. 1957. Class c of the American Indian by a long-time student of the Indians and their problems.

Cushman, Dan. *Stay Away Joe*. Stay Away, Joe Publications. 1953. About an ex-marine who returns to his reservation and what happens to his life.

Curtis, Natalie. *The Indians' Book*. Dover. 1968. About Indian lore, musical and narrative to form a record of songs and legends of their race.

Day, A. Grove. *The Sky Clears: Poetry of the American Indian*. University of Nebraska Press. 1951. 200 poems from forty North American tribes.

Driver, Harold ed. *The Americans on the Eye of Discovery*. Prentice Hall. 1964. Collection of mostly first hand descriptions of eleven Indian tribes.

Elting, Mary. *The Hope Way*. M. Evans and Company. 1969. A boy returns to his fathers Hopi people on their reservation after home he has known in New York City.

Farquhar, Margaret. *Indian Children of America*. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. 1964. Describes customs and training children of certain tribes.

Garst, Doris. *Sitting Bull: Champion of his People*. Messner. 1946. About Sitting Bull and how he tried to save his people from extinction.

Gilliland, Hap. *How the Dogs Saved the Chevennes*. Montana Reading Publications. Folk tales.

Glass, Paul. *Songs and Stories of the North American Indians*. Grosset and Dunlap. 1968. Contains information about five different tribes, describes their songs, games and legends.

Grant, Bruce. *American Indians, Yesterday and Today*. Dutton and Company. 1958. Alphabetically arranged encyclopedia designed as reference book as well as history of the American Indian.

Hagner, D. C. *Navajo Winter Begins*. E. M. Hale and Company. 1938. Story told by Navajo Indian including folk tales and myths.

Hall, G. O. *Osceola*. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. 1964. A well-written biography of Osceola who fought compulsory emigration from Florida.

Heiderstadt, D. *Indian Friends and Foes*. David McKay. 1958. A study of the personalities of thirteen famous Indians.

Hirschfelder, Arlene. *American Indian Authors: A Representative Bibliography*. Association on American Indian Affairs. 45-page annotated bibliography which lists over 100 books authored by American Indians.

Hofsinde. *Indian Sign Language*. Morrow. 1956. Shows how to form gestures representing over 500 words in Indian sign language.

Indian Historian Press. *The Weewish Tree*. A magazine published six times yearly of the American Indian for young people.

LaFarge, Oliver. *Cochise of Arizona*. Dutton. 1954. True story of Cochise, the Apache.

Lott, Milton. *Dance Back the Buffalo*. Pocket Books. 1959. Historical novel of ghost dance and three Sioux tragedy resulting from it.

Marriott, Alice and Rachlin, Carol L. *American Indian Mythology*. Crowell. 1958. A book of Indian myths and legends. It represents more than 20 major North American tribes.

McSpadden, Walker J. *Indian Heroes*. Croswell. 1950. About Indian heroes which would make any Indian proud of his heritage.

Schoolcraft, Henry R. *The Hiawatha Legends*. J. B. Lippincott and Company. 1856.

Tall Bull, Henry and Weist, Tom. *Winter Hunt*. Montana Reading Publications. Describes the place of women in the Plains Indian tribe.

Lerner, M. L. *Red Man, White Man, African Chief, the Story of Skin Color*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications. 1960. Explanation of skin color in living things including plants, animals, and man.16

Momaday, N. Scott. *House Made of Dawn*. 1969. Description of joys and dilemmas of being Indian in the so-called modern world.

Indian Days - a film about Indian days and Kamloops rodeo. 17

Sources: Teacher

Bernardoni, Louis C. and others. *Successful Teacher Practices in the Teaching of Indian Youngsters*. Arizona State Dept. of Public Instruction, Phoenix, 1961. 56 pp.

Gray, W. S. *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*. UNESCO, Switzerland. 1956.

Poston, William K. Jr., ed. *Teaching Indian Pupils in Public Schools*. Mesa Public Schools, Arizona. 1967. 69 pp. 18

American Heritage. *The American Indian*. Adapted from The American Heritage Book of Indians. Random House. 1963. For middle and upper grades.

Hofsinde, Robert. Morrow. Grades intermediate and upper.
Indian Beadwork. 1958. 96 pp.
Indian Fishing and Camping. 1963. 96 pp.
Indian Music Makers. 1967. 96 pp.
The Indian Medicine Man. 1966.
Indian Costumes. 1968.

Teacher Resource Books

American Indian--Read and Color Books. Eukabi Publisher. One page drawings with a page of text describing the picture. Featured are Pueblo, Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Indians of the Plains, Apache, and famous chiefs.

Goosen, Irvy W. *Navajo Made Easier*. Northland Press. 1971. Conversational book with sequential lessons.

Films

Age of the Buffalo. Color. 1957. Encyclopedia Britannica. Presents a vivid impression of life on the western plains. For upper grades.

American Indian of Today. Color. 1957. Encyclopedia Britannica. Analyzes current trends that are shaping the future of American Indians and their adjustment to new ways of living. Intermediate and upper grades.

Indian American. Color. 1969. Triangle Productions. A documentary to help the white man understand American Indians of today. For upper grades.

The Navajo Indian. Color. 1963. Disney. Shows Navajo carding, dying, and weaving rugs to sell at trading posts and shows silver work. Intermediate and upper grades

Educational Reading Service Filmstrips. American Background Filmstrips:

Americans Before Columbus. 1968.
Indian Celebrations. 1969.
Indian Children. 1969.
Indian Homes. 1969.
Indian Legends. 1969.
Indian Who Showed the Way. 1969.

Each has a caption with one main thought developes in succeeding frames for students with reading or learning difficulties. Max Snow. *There's An Indian in Your Classroom*. Idaho State Dept. of Education, Boise. 1967. A guidebook for teachers of Indian Children.

Library of Congress Records:

Songs of the Iroquois Language
Sioux
Navajo
Apache
Pueblo

Everest Records. California. Authentic Music of the American Indian. Three-album record. 20 Indian tribes. 19

Activities to Build Vocabulary and Foster Fluent Speech of Disadvantaged Children

1. Conduct a "style show" in which pupils describe what others in class are wearing.
2. Play a piano selection or a recording, and have pupils describe how the music makes them feel.
3. Let pupils feel, then describe, the texture of such materials as sandpaper, cotton batting, sponge, silk, sand.
4. Let pupils, while blindfolded, remove an unknown object from a grab bag and describe its texture, shape, size, and weight.
5. Read a story or poem aloud and ask pupils to pick out the words, such as squeal, buzz, purr, growl, that "make a noise."
6. List on the board such phrases as: "As quiet as..." "As loud as..." "As bright as..." and let pupils think of as many ways as possible of completing them.
7. Let pupils complete sentences with provocative beginnings, such as, "If I were a giant I would..."
8. Let pupils describe the appearance and personality of a character in a story they have heard read.
9. Bring to class vials of vanilla and lemon extract, peppermint oil, and other kitchen flavorings; let pupils smell them, then describe the odors.
10. Stand a full-length mirror against a wall; let pupils stand before it and describe themselves aloud.
11. Teach a "special" word each day, and at roll call let each child respond with that word rather than with his name.
12. Teach pupils the name of every object in the room, and try to get pupils to call objects by name instead of "it" or "that."
13. Display a child's drawing depicting two or more persons, and let pupils try to imagine what one person might be saying to the other.
14. Use the daily news as a springboard for teaching new words. Hurricane, blizzard, drought, disaster, economy, employment, or conflict, for example, can be gleaned from almost any front page, depending on the season.

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Osborn, Lynn R. *Speech Communication and the American Indian: Challenges and Contrasts*. U. S., Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 070 118, November, 1972.

Rich, Gene. *Teaching Reading to the American Indian.* U. S., Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 075 799, May, 1973.

Thomas, Donald. *The Importance of Being Equal.* Address at George Mason University, Fairfax, March 19, 1975.

Whorf, Benjamin L. *Language, Thought, and Reality.* Cambridge: Technological Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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[2]Opinion expressed by Donald Thomas, American University, March 19, 1975.

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[6]Gene Rich. *Teaching Reading to the American Indian,* U.S., Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 075 799, May, 1973.

[7]Laura Fisher. "All Chiefs, No Indians: What Children's Books Say About American Indians." *Elementary English,* 51 (February, 1974), 185-189.

[8]Opinion expressed by Dr. Yates, professor at George Mason University, April 9, 1975.

[9]Robert W. Young. "Language Characteristics of Specific Groups." *Reading for the Disadvantaged,* ed. Thomas D. Horn. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1970, pp. 161-166.

[10]Lynn R. Osborn. *Speech Communication and the American Indian: Challenges and Contrasts.* U.S., Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 070 118, November, 1972.

[11]Fisher, loc. cit.

[12]Young, loc. cit.

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Symposia

Competency-Based Reading Programs for Preservice Elementary Teachers

Wednesday, May 4

Fontainebleau Hotel, Voltaire Room

Co-chairing: Shirley B. Merlin and James L. Laffey, Madison College, Harrisonburg, Virginia

"Planning, Organizing and Implementing a Field-Based Competency Reading Education Program" Shirley B. Merlin, Madison College

"Components and Use of Competency-Based Instructional Modules in the College Classroom: A Description and Simulation" Gary L. Shaffer and Joseph A. Muia, Madison College

"Evaluating Affective and Cognitive Responses to Instructional Modules: Student's Feedback, A Basis for Change" Betty E. Coyle, Madison College

"Measuring Student Success in a Competency-Based Program: Test Development and Assessment Procedures" James L. Laffey, Madison College

"Integrating Competency Field-Based Program of Reading Education into a Teacher Education Program" Charles W. Blair, Madison College

"Impact of a Competency Field-Based Program of Reading Education upon Reading Instruction in Participating Public Schools" Phyllis Coulter, Rockingham County Public Schools, Harrisonburg, Virginia

READING FAIR: A WAY TO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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Are you looking for a medium by which the public and students can learn the importance of reading and discover that reading can be fun? Try a Reading Fair!

The Newport News Council of the International Reading Association r.. .tly held a Reading Fair at a large shopping mall. Over two thousand members of the community attended the event. More than one hundred twenty psychologists, classroom teachers, .eading consultants, public school and college students, community members, school administrators and supervisors, professors, Title I teachers and directors, speech specialists and city and school officials volunteered their time. From all indications, the Fair was a success. Both TV and newspaper coverage was ample and complimentary. Below are some suggestions to help in planning such events.

Public Officials/Reading Corner

City and school officials are usually willing to help whenever and wherever they can - especially with community projects. Children and parents enjoy meeting them. These officials can read or tell stories to children in a "reading corner." An ideal "reading corner" is a carpeted area located outside the main flow of traffic. Having public officials promote reading can be an important part of the Fair. A professional storyteller can also prove successful.

Consultants and Specialists

Reading consultants, speech specialists, psychometrists, and psychologists can be included in the Fair at booths or at tables for the purpose of consultation by parents. Although these specialists should not co.sider questions about specific teachers or school rela.. incidents, they can give suggestions to parents concerning their speciality and its relationship to the reading process.

Student Help

College students involved in education courses can make displays of reading aids for parents to make at home. Booklets, explaining how these aids can be made, might be sold for a nominal amount. Having students and professors on hand to explain the material is very helpful. Public school children can do an excellent job of writing original plays and presenting them at the mall. Young and mature audiences

enjoy these presentations. Also, classroom displays of student work should be considered.

Book Fair

A book fair can be included in the Reading Fair and net the sponsoring group a profit in addition to alerting parents to good reading material. A book dealer in the mall might be able to supply the books which the group requests. Distributing 10% discount tickets for book fair purchases can be an incentive to parents to buy good reading material. The book dealer might have some suggestions c o n cerning this. *Workjobs for Parents* and *Workjobs of Teachers* (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company) are excellent books which explain methods by which various reading skills can be taught. These books or similar ones can be included in the book fair or sold separately.

Distributing 10% discount tickets for book fair purchases can be an incentive to parents to buy good reading material.

Teachers

Classroom teachers should be on hand to explain reading material for students in all grades. These materials can include games, various sound and visual lessons, and leisure reading material. Title I teachers can provide interesting displays of the materials they use in working with students in the area of reading. Materials should be available for students to try.

Community Groups

Various community groups promoting reading such as the local Literacy Council and another Reading Council can be invited to have a display. They can include a membership table in their display if the sponsoring group is agreeable. The sponsoring group may want one itself. The International Reading Association headquarters in Newark, Delaware, is always helpful in providing material about its organization and about reading in general.

Publicity

Good publicity is a must! It is a good idea to get newspaper coverage both before and after the event. TV coverage is often not difficult to obtain if local and city officials are involved. Also, an official from the Fair's sponsoring organization might be able to obtain time on a TV "talk show." Students can take home brochures announcing the Fair. Posters should be displayed in schools, public buildings, local stores, and in the mall. On the day of the Fair, large banners at the site of the event are necessary. It is a good idea to hand out material explaining the Fair's purpose to those attending.

Location

An ideal place to reach the public is at a large shopping center or mall. Such places must be reserved in advance. It is strongly recommended that a contract be signed to reserve the date for the Fair. Although it may be bad business practice, without a contract, the public relations director at a mall might assign the agreed upon date to another group which has the possibility of bringing in more revenue for the mall. Remember that large numbers of people frequent malls at holiday time which is an excellent time for a Reading Fair. A Saturday is an excellent day or the event might last two days.

Additional Tips

1. The Fair must be well organized.
2. Booths and display tables should be attractive.
3. Explanatory signs should be placed on all booths, tables and at the "reading corner."
4. Everyone who is involved with the Fair should be thanked.

SOME VERY BASIC WORDS

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Various authorities have estimated that there are some 600,000 different words in the English language. It is not necessary for readers or writers to know all these words since many words are used over and over in both writing and reading.

Many teachers know about the Dolch basic sight vocabulary. This vocabulary is basic because its 220 words account for up to 70 per cent of the words in most primary basal reader programs and over 50 per cent of the words used in middle grade reading texts and content area books. Among materials written for older students and adults, the 220 Dolch words comprise approximately 50 per cent of the running words in the text.

> For beginning readers, the task of learning several hundred words can be an awesome one.

For beginning readers, the task of learning several hundred words can be an awesome one. Teachers working with beginning readers want their students to learn many words but realize that some words, by their frequency of occurence, are more important than other words. Teachers are likely to be interested in a short list of words so basic that they occur very frequently in materials written for children. If the words would also appear in all types of reading material, the words would have even greater utility.

Thirteen is generally considered to be an unlucky number. But in reading, thirteen can be a lucky number--especially when it comes to certain words. A reader who knows only thirteen words (if they are the right ones) could expect to meet one of them in every four words read. In other words, if teachers made sure that their students knew thirteen words, the child would be equipped to deal with approximately one-fourth of all words (on the average) in all types of reading materials. But what are those words? With a little thought, you can probably list a majority of the words. I've provided space for you to list the thirteen words you believe to be very basic words. Go ahead. Take a few minutes and write your best guesses.

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____ 6. _____
7. _____ 8. _____
9. _____ 10. _____
11. _____ 12. _____
13. _____

Let's assume for a moment that your list contains those magic thirteen words. How would you teach them to your students? Flash cards? Experience stories? Phrases? Certainly all of these ideas (and many more) have been used in the past and I suspect that they will continue to be used. My bias would urge teachers to help youngsters learn the words in a meaningful context via experience stories or pattern books like Bill Martin's *Instant Readers*. I would also want to help my students see that these words occur over and over. It's obvious to us that this is the case; however, many children don't realize that some words recur with great frequency. If teachers help their students perceive this redundancy, students may gain greater confidence in unlocking words since they can predict that some words frequently reappear.

Knowing the thirteen "magic" words will help the child deal with approximately 25 per cent of the words met in print. While this reduces the burdens of unknown words, it is a far cry from making the child a proficient reader. Knowing several hundred words will account for 50 per cent of the running words, but, once again, this will not make the child an efficient reader. Even knowing 2,500 words still leaves the child with approximately one unknown in every four (in a natural reading situation). Clearly, word lists quickly reach a point of diminishing returns. Nevertheless, the thirteen words that follow may help teachers realize that some words are, indeed, very basic to all reading. The thirteen words are: a, and, for, he, in, is, it, of, that, the, to, was, you.

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Preconvention Institutes
No. 25
Comprehending Comprehension
Monday, May 2 - Tuesday, May 3
Eden Roc Hotel, Pompeii Room

What Teachers Can Find Out About A Student's Comprehension, Gary Kilarr, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Va.

KINESICS AND READING

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It is rather surprising that in all the plethora of material on reading which is being written and published recently, little is being said about a very important element which is involved in learning to read; i. e., that infra-communication system which is a very large part of the cultural tradition of a society and which is so essential in the transmission of those behavioral patterns which assure a neonate an opportunity of becoming an enculturated or socialized individual, successfully adjusting to the social life which is necessary for his survival. I refer to that subtle communicative process which begins before the vocalization process develops and which may be of far greater significance, in that it can possibly be shown that the verbalization process is dependent upon it. This subtle communication process is referred to as "body motion," "body movement," or "body language," and the science that deals with it is known as the *Science of Kinesics*.

George W. Mead pointed out years ago in *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934) (1964) that an infant is born without mind or self. In the beginning he is conscious but not self-conscious. Self awareness develops as the infant picks up body cues from the mother whose face looms over the crib and whose expressions of approbation or disapproval make the squirming pink bit of protoplasm aware of its first social cues and then eventually leads to a sense of self-hood, separating the infant now from the crib, the blankets, and the other material objects close by until it gradually becomes an individual aware of itself. Later, language will make possible mind, but long before this, those many body cues will have begun the humanization process.

As Birdwhistell (1970) points out, a child before attaining membership in his society must gain control of the pattern of the communication-system of his society and must be incorporated into that system. Society's inadequate individuals, schizophrenics and deviants, are incorporated into other systems and therefore are misfits. Gaining control of language is not accumulating an aggregate of words as a vocabulary. Skill in interpreting body motion is not made up of memorizing a list of facial expressions nor is language adequacy merely a matter of "hooking together pieces of words and gestures into meaning forms called sentences."

Gaining control of language is not accumulating an aggregate of words as a vocabulary.

The acquisition of skills in reading is the acquisition of partly the communication pattern of a society. To vocalize, to use body language, to recognize symbols is to transmit "feelings." We speak of the transmission of "meaning." What we really transmit is "feelings." Often our verbalizations do not convey meaning. Meaning is much more frequently conveyed through "body cues."

In verbal communication in English it has been shown that of the thousands of possible sounds and combination of sounds we could have used, we utilize some 45 phonemes: 9 vowels, 3 semi-vowels, 21 consonants, 4 stresses, 4 pitches, and 4 junctures.

On the other hand consider what is involved in "body language." The human face can form 250,000 expressions (Birdwhistell, 1970). Think of what we do when we "cock our head," "drop our head," "shake our head from side to side," or "up and down;" what we do when we shift our body position, use a finger, or move an arm, bat an eye, half close the eyelid, wrinkle the face, move the lips, etc. Every movement of every part of the anatomy conveys a meaning. Even our stance, legs wide apart or close together are saying something.

No wonder Emerson wrote, "What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say."

We have just recently through kinesics begun to scientifically analyze what is involved in body communication. At the present, scientists have isolated thirty-two kinemes for Americans in the face and head area. There are three kinemes of head nod, the "one nod" the "two nod" and the "three nod;" which use the entire head. There are four kinemes of brow behavior. There are four significant degrees of lid closure. The nose reflects four significant behaviors: "Wrinkle nose," "compressed nostrils," "bilateral nostril flare" and "unilateral nostril flare or closure." There are seven kinemes which make up the circumoral complex, involving mouth and lips. (Birdwhistell, 1970)

Language and reading are a part of the communication pattern of literate societies, but it is not surprising how

* * *

OUR NEWEST COUNCIL

Congratulations to our newest reading council to be chartered by the IRA - Southwest Virginia Council. The council serves the counties of Russell, Tazwell, Buchanan, and Washington as well as the city of Bristol.

Council President is:
Juanita Lashlee
104 Belle Brook Drive
Bristol, Tenn. 37620

successfully many pre-literate societies have enculturated their neonates for endless generations without written language, relying solely on oral and body communication.

We have reason to suppose that body communication is far more important in literate societies than we have ever recognized. The child learning to speak used his body. Try talking without your hands, or your head, or your eyes.

Think of what the teacher often says with her head, her eyes, her lips, her body as over against what she says verbally. Some of us develop remarkable skill in picking up communication cues from individuals around us.

Think of what the teacher often says with her head, her eyes, her lips, her body as over against what she says verbally.

Far more important than we ever realized the child is incorporating a communication system. It is highly possible that faulty learning is frequently due to faulty transmission of body cues.

It was Rudolf Otto, the great German theologian, who first introduced the Greek term *Charisma* to the western world. Max Weber picked up the term from Otto and made it a part of the sociology of leadership. (Bendix, 1962) It required about fifty years for the term to leave the halls of academia and filter down to the man in the street. Today ordinary citizens speak of "charisma" and "charismatic" leadership. One individual has "it" and another lacks "it." What is "it?" Weber intended charisma to mean a group of attractive qualities in personality which turned on other people and drew them to the charismatic individual with a fierce attachment and loyalty. What is charisma?

I am quite sure that a large part of charisma is an extraordinary gift of the use of body movement to convey "meanings" or "feelings." The person literally exudes through eyes, face, hands, torso, head and muscles unmistakeable messages. He may be gifted in speech but it is not speech which turns the trick; it is the magnetism of his body. Our younger generation today is aware of this when they talk of "good vibes" and "bad vibes." There are vibrations which each person radiates in more or less degree; in a negative or positive way.

Beyond vocalization, the child is learning something else. Even as he acquires skill in vocalization, or fails to, he acquires skill in comprehending kinesic qualifiers, or fails to, and for him the latter is of great importance. What the teacher does with her body as she instructs the pupils may be the most important part of her behavior and how successfully the child reads her may be far more important for him than how he reads a page in an artificial book situation. The gift of communicating through body cues and the gift of receiving and understanding these cues is all-essential in incorporating society's patterns of communication.

The science of kinesics is in such a beginning stage that it would be premature to instruct a reading teacher in the use of body motion. However, we should be saying some things to that reading teacher which she should hear loud and clear.

However, we should be saying some things to that reading teacher which she should hear loud and clear.

1. Your verbal communication is important but remember you take into an interpersonal situation your body movements which override your vocalization.
2. Your pupils' anttenae vary in receptive ability.
3. Successful communication is essential to the development of reading skills.
4. The child needs to read the teacher and the teacher needs to read the child.
5. The child is watching for every kinesic qualifier; a sigh, a smile, a sheer, a giggle, a whisper, a yawn, a tensed torso, a tilted head, a wrinkled brow, wide open or half closed eyes, the flare of the nostrils: all these and many more cues are being picked up and "meaning" is coming through.

Duffy (1969) has suggested some activities which the teacher can use; e. g., have her children watch a film with the sound off and write down what the persons are probably saying. Then have them see the film with the sound on and check with what they thought the actors said; or have the children tell stories without using their hands.

Perhaps in time the science of kinesics will be able to chart for the teacher all the kinemes she uses and when to use them in the teaching process. In the meantime we can say to that reading teacher that body communication is a tremendously important part of the communicative pattern of any society and that a teacher neglects or ignores it at the peril of failure to orient her pupil in society.

This is an awesome responsibility.

Arnold Gesell before his death used to quote a bit of verse which questions whether we can teach a child to grow. It would like to paraphrase it here. The child is speaking:

"You say, you will teach me to *read*?
Isn't *reading* a matter of melody and witchcraft?"

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PAST PRESIDENTS OF VSRA

Dr. Betty Yarborough	1968-69
Mrs. Hilda Pendergrass	1969-70
Dr. Ruth Lewis	1970-71
Mrs. Mae Franklin	1971-72
Mrs. Mary Johnson	1972-73
Dr. Patricia King	1973-74
Miss June Curry	1974-75
Dr. Mae C. Johnson	1975-76

READING PROBLEMS: A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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A psycholinguistic perspective of reading problems would assume that "...nothing a child does when he reads orally (or silently) is accidental or random . . . (Burke & Goodman, 1970, p. 121)." Such a perspective is based first of all, on the dynamics of language and the psychology of manipulating language for purposes of communication and comprehension. When employed to explain reading and reading problems, psycholinguistics would further utilize the knowledge and intuition about language that a child has acquired in learning to speak. Thus, the only reading disabled children, such a perspective would not assist to a lesser or greater, limited or unlimited degree, are those children who have not acquired language. The assumption underlying this statement is that regardless of the severity of a perceptual handicap or whatever, the child has the capacity for language; and thus there is a basis for reading acquisition. (It must be kept in mind, for example, that there is nothing sacrosanct about certain modalities and learning to read. That is, the visually handicapped may learn to read using braille, and the hearing impaired must learn to read through methods that do not stress auditory perception and discrimination.)

Since psycholinguistics presupposes that reading is for comprehension, what are the types of causal factors of reading problems that obstruct meaing? Carter and McGinnis (1970) suggest the following:

1 - Visual Defects
2 - Inability to Sustain Attention.
3 - Lack of Experiential Background.
4 - Lack of Knowledge of How to Read Effectively.
5 - Inability to Maintain Effort.
6 - Marked Feelings of Inadequacy (p. 234).

What tenets of these factors may, to some extent, be explained by a psycholinguistic perspective of reading?

Visual Defects

Marion Monroe (in *Reading Disabilities*, edited by Harold Newman, 1969) offers the following classic comments on the types of visual problems that may impede reading. The observable manifestations of these problems are also discussed.

> 1. Lack of clear-cut retinal images...(Manifestations:) The child . . . confuses similarly shaped letters such as o, e, c, or b, h, n, etc. Reading errors consist of confusion of words such as "out," "cat," "eat;" or "hand," "bond," "hard," etc. (Monroe, p. 51).

One psycholinguistic reply to this visual reading problem would be: "Are children really misperceiving or merely miscalling (Lipton, 1972, p. 760)?" A definition of reading based on comprehension would not consider accurate word perception the most critical factor in reading. Instances where misperceptions cause miscues (discrepancies between what the child reads and the printed material) are often created by phonemically similar ("git" for "get"), or graphemically similar ("where" for "there") words.

> 2. Lack of precision in discrimination of complex visual patterns...(Manifestations:) The child seems unable to react to words as units. He reads slowly, by spelling out the letters...His reading errors consist of omission of sounds and filling in words by guessing from one or two recognizable letters, thus producing vowel and consonant errors (Monroe, p. 51).

In response to "spelling out letters," the question must be asked: Has the reading methodology interfered with the process of reading for comprehension? That is, has the teacher required the child to focus on maximal cues (every letter and every sound) for perfect word-calling, and at the expense of meaning? (Oral reading, it should be noted, is not the same as reading as a different set of production variables is required to read orally.) As for omissions, insertions, and "guessing," the psycholinguistic reply is obvious: The child is utilizing information processing strategies on linguistic cues in trying to decode the printed page. The teacher of this child may wish to use the *Reading Miscue Inventory* (Goodman and Burke, 1972) to determine the extent of

meaning change involved in such miscues.

3. Lack of precision in discrimination of the spatial orientation of patterns. . . (Manifestations:) The child confuses the patterns which are alike in shape, but which are placed in different positions as b, d; p, q; u, n; m, w; f, t; "was," "saw," "on," "no," etc. . . . His reading errors consist of reversals, repetitions, and sometimes, because of correlating the sequence of sounds with the reversed sequence of letters, of consonant and vowel errors (Monroe, pp. 51 and 52).

A first question that may be asked is: What methodology was used in initial reading instruction? By forcing the child to focus on maximal cues (e.g., individual letters and sounds as noted earlier) such reversals may be more likely to occur. That is, a meaningful context may not exist, plus the child may not be trying to make sense out of what he is reading. Repetition may simply be an attempt at correction by using linguistic generalizations. Once again, a miscue inventory will note the severity of the "problem" and will suggest methods for improving necessary strategies.

Inability to Sustain Attention

Among the personality and emotional factors which may impede progress in reading may be mentioned the following: attentional instability; resistance to reading; fear, timidity, embarassment; withdrawal, etc. In some cases the emotional factors may be due to constitutional instability or poor habit-training. In other cases the emotional factors may result directly from the failure to learn to read due to other reasons, and then in turn aggravate the disability (Monroe, p. 55).

Since children may misperceive words as a "result of impulsive or avoidance behavior, which in turn may be due to fear of failure, hostility or unmet dependency needs (Lipton, p. 761)," this situation must obviously be alleviated to insure reading success. Much will depend on the personality and attitude of the teacher. A beginning, however, may be to involve the child in creating his own reading material (i. e., language experience stories). By accepting as valid the language and experiences of the child, much of the fear of failure may be removed.

Much will depend on the personality and attitude of the teacher.

Lack of Experiential Background

Among the environmental factors which impede progress in reading may be mentioned the following: foreign language, illiterate parents, truancy and poor school attendance, frequent moves from school to school, number of siblings or ordinal position of child among the siblings, etc. (Monroe, p. 55).

No child lacks an experiential background unless he has, somehow, been isolated from mankind. Also, studied from a transformational-generative grammar perspective, each child's language, regardless of social dialect, is functional for the purpose of communication. This is a linguistic fact. Unfortunately, there is the social fact that some dialects are stigmatized. By accepting the child's language and utilizing the language experience approach, however, enormous obstacles to the reading process may be removed.

Lack of Knowledge of How to Read Effectively

When comparing reading acquisition with language acquisition, the conclusion reached would probably be that most children have a knowledge of how to read effectively. However, this knowledge is often affected or obscured by reading methodologies. (For example, many methodologies almost solely stress graphophonics — at the exclusion of such important language components as syntax and semantics). A psycholinguistic approach could not agree more with Marion Monroe's suggestions that: "1. Overstress of speed reading may develop habits which impede progress, and 2. Overstress of some methods of word-recognition may develop habits which impede progress in reading (Monroe, p. 54)."

Inability to Maintain Effort

Although such a problem may have a diverse etiology (for example, hyperactivity or feelings of inadequacy), alleviation may partially occur by maintaining interest. Reading should be intrinsically rewarding, and materials should be selected with the individual reader in mind.

Marked Feelings of Inadequacy

Feelings of inadequacy may be the result of constant failure - failure due to teachers, methodologies, lack of parental support, and so forth. The fact that teachers still refer to differences between expected responses and observed responses in oral reading as "errors," for example, indirectly denotes the unacceptance of a child's dialect, his experiences, and even the child himself. Discrepancies between the child and the printed material are not wrong answers, but rather insights into the child's processing of language. (A comprehension-based reading program, for example, would consider "pony" for "horse" of higher quality than "house" for "horse", i. e., not just a wrong answer.)

In conclusion, psycholinguistics requires introspection into the reading process. It suggests that the child brings linguistic strategies to the task of reading, and that he utilizes syntactic and semantic, as well as graphophonic, cueing systems. It also suggests that methodologies may, in fact, create many of the symptoms of reading problems. It maintains that language processes must remain intact and not segmented and sequenced. It places the child--his interests and language--at the fore. It suggests that reading must be for comprehension. It then offers a diagnostic instrument, the *Reading Miscue Inventory*, that analyzes the language processing strategies utilized by the child while reading. When confronted with children discouraged by reading problems, should we not give them the benefits of this information?

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WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN READ

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Parents can help their children improve their reading skills and at the same time have fun together. There are many different skills involved in the development of reading proficiency, and most of these skills can be developed by parents taking a little time with their children within the framework of a "typical" day and with very little additional preparation.

The following suggestions are offered by the authors to help parents develop certain skills in their children in reading development--primarily in the area of activity-based instruction relying on home training experiences.

Many visual, auditory, and motor skills can be developed by parents using a variety of training techniques which are readily available in most households. It should be added that this list of suggestions should only serve as a guide or rough outline, and the reader should use as many of his own suggestions as possible as no list is all encompassing.

The three categories of skill development can best be divided into the following three areas: (1) improving visual skills; (2) improving auditory skills; and (3) improving motor skills.

In the area of improving visual skills, the parent could take the child around the house and have the child spot items which are out of place. The parent could ask the child to look for certain items and be able to identify items from pictures. The parent could use the newspaper, magazines, catalogs, etc., and have the child identify the items from the pictures such as animals, birds, furniture, etc. The possibilities of this exercise are almost limitless and should be used extensively.

In the area of improving auditory skills, the child could be told to listen for something specific such as a bell timer, an alarm clock, a cuckoo clock, etc., and then asked to read these words in a story. The child could also answer the telephone to possibly identify the caller in a voice discrimination exercise--also, by using the radio as a listening exercise without visual help such as the television. The child could also be instructed in listening to and recognizing bird calls, animal sounds, etc. Probably the most important area of improving auditory skills is for the parent to read aloud to the child on a daily basis or several times a day. This is very, very important and should be stressed whenever possible. Short stories or books are best and should be chosen from subjects which interest the child.

In the area of improving motor skills, the parent could work with the child in following directions such as in building a model or putting together a recipe. The child could also follow directions such as setting the table, hanging and folding laundry, mopping or vacuuming the floor, etc. The child could sort items such as silverware, screws and nails, colored and white clothes, etc., to heighten his motor skills.

Probably the most important area of improving auditory skills is for the parent to read aloud to the child on a daily basis or several times a day.

In conclusion, there are many activities in the visual, auditory, and motor skills areas that parents can work with their children, and these efforts can be enjoyable for everyone. This interest on the part of the parent will also lead to a higher degree of self-concept and self-worth on the part of the child and should also be stressed. The parent can give the child a clearer picture of the world through real experience such as a trip to the store, post office, bank, fire department, police department, etc. Thus, it becomes evident to a child how big the world or neighborhood is and why it is important to know his name, address, phone number, etc. Yet it repeatedly comes back to having fun for both parties as fun is essential in the life of each and every human being. In our daily routines, quite often parents and children do not have enough time or fun together as possible, and this fun can be developed into an enjoyable learning experience which in fact requires very little additional effort. Life, for many children, seems empty and discouraging and is filled with routines and parents who continually nag about poor grades in school. Quite often parents and children do not have a common ground and do not go anywhere or do anything together. Through these suggestions, parents and children may rediscover the fun of reading and being together and how important we are to each other.

VIRGINIA'S COMMITMENT TO THE GIFTED

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School For The Gifted
State Department of Education
Richmond, Virginia 23216

Virginia's commitment to gifted and talented students is unequivocally spelled out by the General Assembly through the Standards of Quality. For the 1976-78 biennium, Standard No. 4 states, in part:

> Each school division shall provide differentiated instruction to increase educational challenges to enrich the experiences and opportunities available to gifted and talented students.

That is the mandate. It is, therefore, incumbent upon each school division and each school within each division to fulfill the intent and the purpose of the mandate.

For several years now, the reasons for providing differentiated education for gifted and talented students have become well-known to most educators and laymen. I will not belabor these reasons except to say that, indeed, our gifted and talented young people are our most valuable natural resource. Give them an opportunity to learn, give them freedom to progress at *their* rate, give them exciting alternatives and freedom to choose, give them challenges so that they will be eager to learn for the sake of learning and they, in turn, will assume their share of responsibility for their own education. Eventually, they will be the group to make the greatest contribution to society; they will provide the leadership and the brainpower that will keep this country strong. Deny them these opportunities and challenges and they will likely turn away from learning and devote their efforts to the fulfillment of selfish motives.

Gifted and talented students exhibit a variety of characteristics early in life. They have an insatiable curiosity. They are often early and avid readers; their span of attention is long. They can lose themselves in the pursuit of interests of their choosing. Often they are mavericks! They are dreamers; they possess a sense of humor and a capacity for commitment. They want to know about love an logic in the broadest sense of the words: love, as a concern for their fellow man; logic, as an ordering of the complexities they see about them. They are eager to know themselves and the world around them. They are critical thinkers who do not necessarily believe that there are only "two sides to every argument," for example. Their superiority is manifest in abstract subjects; their inferiority, generally, in spelling, arithmetical operations, and penmanship.

How is Virginia meeting its commitment to the gifted and talented students? The attack is two-pronged: (1) the programs that are offered in the schools in accordance with the legislative mandate and, (2) the Governor's School for the Gifted. I have chosen to direct my remarks to the latter, the Governor's School for the Gifted, which is now approaching its fifth session. The Governor's School, as the students prefer to call it, accommodates approximately 400 rising juniors and seniors from the public and private high schools each summer. The Governor's School is a four-week program which operates at three separate colleges in the State during the summer. The Governor's School is a program of academic, artistic, social, and recreational activities all set in an informal, though structured, intellectual atmosphere. The major portion of each day is devoted to academic and artistic pursuits. These range from astronomy to sculpture; from creative writing to physiology; from a course in contemporary Soviet Society to one on the American Presidency; from printmaking to anthropology; from dance to philosophy; from foreign languages to psychology. The students live in the college dormitories, have their meals in the college dining rooms, and enjoy the full facilities that the college has to offer. All expenses, except travel to and from the site and "pocket" money, are paid from State funds.

Lest you think that a community of intellectual and artistic peers produces snobbish, elite individuals, I'd like you to "meet" some of these students through their written words. I have literally tomes of letters from the students who take their time to write, voluntarily, of their deep gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this once-in-lifetime experience. As you listen, I believe that you will recognize characteristics such as those outlined earlier. Let's start with the most recent session which was held at Mary Baldwin, Mary Washington, and Randolph-Macon Woman's Colleges.

A participant from the 1976 School, who felt the need to give vent to her emotions, through an avenue other than tears, wrote an article which she entitled, "The Gift."

> My brain is defiantly pushing the thought of leaving here Tuesday to the darkest, most remote corner it can find. At the same time it touches the idea continually as one touches a bruise, curiously, carefully, fascinated by the rush of feeling, however painful. I am not ready to leave the Governor's School for the Gifted, and will not be ready to leave five days from now when the schedule dictates that it is time to go. The people that I have found here, along with the backgrounds they represent and the ideas they have produced, are sufficient to build a community that I feel I could live in indefinitely. I am at home here.
>
> However, through the sentimentality of the desire to stay here forever, I see a glimpse of reality, and I know that this Utopia is not complete. My mother wrote to me last week with the wisdom that children are always astonished to find in their parents:
>
> The experiences you seem to be having there are everything we would want for you. I suppose that for each of you, it is the first time you have let down all the way and been completely yourselves -- a true mecca, as David Anderson puts it, so it must be one of the true high points of your life. Although you may only be able to think of us as parents, many of us have had

the same experiences as you all have had out in the "real world" -- that is, covering up abilities under peer pressures, having some difficulties finding people on the same wave length, etc., and that continues on no matter what age. So believe it or not, parents do understand that and can empathize with it. I know, too, it will be an adjustment coming back but, Stephanie, though I'll always need the Susans and the Judies I have enjoyed, I would never for the world trade in the Kays and Deas at the other end and Sharols and the Sue's in the middle of the spectrum -- there is just too much of value in all directions. Think about it.

I did think about it, and I realize that I will have to go to my own home, not just physically, but go home emotionally. I have trouble picturing myself returning to my old routines: going to baseball games, lying in the sun at the beach, spending my evenings beside the pool in Mark's backyard. Everything will go on like it did before, and no one will realize where I've been or how important it was to me. When my friends are talking about the time-filling events I missed while I was gone this month I will be nodding and laughing with them, but part of me will be screaming, "Can't you see how I've changed? Don't you want to know what I've learned?" But I could never explain it to them anyway.

I know I will get over Governor's School. The special friendships will, unfortunately, fade, although they will be sparked sporatically by an occasional letter or chance reunion. Even though I won't forget the warm joy of the love I feel for my friends here, I will probably forget small events, overdramatize others, add bits, leave out bits, until my memories of this month bear little resemblance to life as it actually unfolded.

It is the idea of getting over the loss of leaving this school that causes the greatest conflict. Should I try to hold on to every detail of what it was like here? Or must I forget most of it in order to enjoy living, as I will always have to be living, with people who, while being good people, do not have the undefinable traits indicated by the label "gifted?"

The following letter, received late in July from a '76 participant, was published in the November issue of *Public Education in Virginia:*

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! for the most exciting, wonderful, fun-filled, maturing, and educational month of my life. I could write for hours about all the beautiful experiences I had and all the things I learned, but let me tell you about just a few.

I must begin with Mr. Mengebier's zoology class. There is no word in the English language to describe it — super, fantastic, fun-filled . . . all of these and much more! I can only stand in great respect and awe of Mr. Mengebier. He is (in my eyes as a frequently over-critical student) perfect. His lectures were fascinating—you should talk with him about malaria someday—and filled with personal experiences that made it all very meaningful and pertinent. The field trips to his property to collect insects and salamanders were great. I never would have dreamed that collecting and identifying **bugs** (YUK!) could be so interesting and so much fun. He took things that would have been dull in any other class (Why is this fish blind? How did this circulatory or digestive system evolve? What is so significant about this animal's reproductive habits?) and made them exciting — it was a great discovery when a class-wide exchange of ideas finally hit upon the answer. Most of all — and this must be the key to his success — I was impressed by his endless enthusiasm. He rushed from table to table, helping someone identify an insect or an organ of their crayfish or (too often in my case) adjusting a microscope. Quite often he would invite us all to examine something of special interest — a shark's stomach crammed with fish, an unusually hairy spider, a bug with prominent mouth parts, a perfectly stained amoeba, or a hard-to-locate blood vessel in the shark. Mr. Mengebier was so obviously fascinated by and enjoying zoology that he passed his love for it onto us. No other teacher I have ever had has even come close to him.

The lectures were, for the most part, superb. I had the creeps for days after one astronomy lecture, thinking about all the millions of stars and planets and **civilizations** that must be out there. Herta Freitag made me realize, once more, how much we have to be thankful for in America; and everytime I play my flute now, I remember "The Sound of Music." Now I know what's going on inside that silver tube of mine!

The lecture I liked the most was the story of the African Lungfish — maybe because the speaker turned such an awful-sounding topic into a fascinating hour, and left me eager to know more. I saw a lungfish at an aquarium in D.C. last Sunday, I recognized it immediately and gave the guy I was with a very condensed but informative talk on it — he was amazed!

What really made the Governor's School memorable were the people. I have been with many different groups but never have I felt like I did in Staunton — we were totally immersed in friendship, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. There was always someone there to gossip with, confide in, lend sympathy, rejoice with (especially when test scores came in!), to help you make decisions, *whatever*. I felt close to everyone. People were friendly, outgoing and fun to be with. No one was so hung up on academics that he or she had not developed other interests. We all had experiences to share.

I matured tremendously while at the Governor's School. I am not at all the same person I was six weeks ago. Instead of feeling like a member of an "elite society," I think I will be better able to communicate with all types of people. A prodding roommate who talked me into going to the first rock dance (even

though I insisted that I had always felt awkward at dances) opened a lot of doors for me when it turned out that I had a great time. Now I can't wait for the first dance at school! And at the Governor's School I had a rare opportunity to escape the bitter competition and pressure which is so hard to avoid in music, and really play for pure enjoyment. If you will excuse a little vanity, getting a standing ovation at the talent show was at once so exciting and so emotional that I was momentarily stunned. It seems like a dream now. Could anything that wonderful have happened to me?!!!

Having heart-to-heart talks with teachers was a rare opportunity. They were really friends, "one-of-us." Instead of seeing a teacher for 50 minutes, we saw them all all day. In the breakfast line, at a lecture, playing tennis, or huddled in robe and slippers waiting for laundry in the basement of Spencer.

All of this and more made my stay in Staunton very memorable and absolutely fantastic. They also made leaving very hard, but I know I've made lifelong friends.

Well, I said I could write for hours, and it seems that I have. I hope the length of this letter hasn't taken up too much of your time!

Thank you very much for all you have done . . .

Keep smiling!

Lots of Love, Lisa

About two weeks after the Governor's School closed in '75, a student wrote:

. . . My stay at the Governor's School was the best four weeks of my life. Take it from me — the Governor's School provides its students with a marvelous opportunity for experimentation and self-evaluation which, otherwise, they would not have had. I think Cicero understood. How's your Latin?

'Quid Ei Potest Videri Magnum In Rebus Humanis,
Cui Aeternitas Omnis Totiusque Mundi Nota Sit
Magnitudo.'

Translation:

'What great potential is evident for mankind
when one's vision encompasses the world's
size and the vastness of the heavens.'

Increasing vision (in the above sense) is what I feel the Governor's School is about. After all, who cannot help but grow inwardly in a situation idyllic as the Governor's School.

My best wishes to you and everyone involved in next year's program.

Yet another '75-er, a young man, wrote:

I expect this letter will look like a carbon copy of about fifty other letters that you have already gotten, but I thought I'd write anyway just say thank you.

Before I went to Governor's School for the Gifted I thought that I would be bored out of my skull, trapped like a fish out of water with one hundred and fifty would-be Werner Von Brauns whose idea of a good time on Friday night was reading Spinoza in the original language. Ha!

Never before have I met one hundred and fifty more happy, normal, good-natured, and intelligent people. Where I live (and I guess where everyone else lives) the stereotyped image of the individual with above average intelligence prevails. Now, however, I know that that's a ridiculous generalization.

I learned three important things at Governor's School:

1. There's nothing abnormal about sitting down and discussing "heavy" topics such as man's purpose on earth.
2. Hath not a gifted person eyes? If you prick him, doth he not bleed? If you tickle him, doth he not laugh? If you poison him, doth he not die?
3. There is nothing to be ashamed of in having brains.

With all my heart, mind, and soul I would like to offer my humble appreciation.

Love you and your program.

Because I yearn to know each individual as an individual and by name, I insist that they wear their name tags. Incidentally, if they lose a tag, I will replace it for 25¢! The following song which the students at one center wrote for and sang to me, indicates their sense of humor. The song is entitled, simply, NAMETAG.

You wear it when it's hot
You wear it when it's cool
That's one rule of the
Governor's School
Chorus: Nametag Nametag Nametag
You wear it to discussions
You wear it to meals
If you don't wear it
You feel like a heel.
Chorus
You wear your nametag
All over the place
Without that tag
You're just a gifted face
Chorus
You wear it when you work
You wear it when you loiter
If you should lose it
She'll charge you a quarter!
Chorus

Another 1975 student, who entered Harvard University this fall, wrote:

Dear Issie P. (as many of them address me!)

The difference in confidence since GS has been tremendous. At the risk of sounding like a Dale Carnegie testimonial, I'd like to say that GS gave me a whole new outlook on myself and others my age. I was

spinning my wheels before GS — I didn't know how to handle myself at dances or parties, and usually wound up miserably unfulfilled after any social events. In class too, teachers would sometimes regard me as a threat, or try to shelve me with the rest of the straight-A-ers in the back row. I felt like a butterfly whose wings had dried, crumpled and bent, in a jar.

GS unscrewed the lid. In four weeks, I and many others underwent a boot camp for the emotions. I ran the gamut. There was no time or reason for insecurity. The faculty made me feel like a person, took time to listen to raw ideas and new-found inspirations. Most of all, the other people, the constant association, dug down and found me. Joy, rejection, shyness, love — they showed it all to me.

I hate to sound like a snob, or an intellectual (I will never be accused of such a heinous identity.) But association with these people, people who think about more than what they will wear to the next dance or what so-and-so said about so-and-so more than the usual high school concerns — was such a refreshing experience that I decided to seek the same in college.

With the assurance from the summer experience that I was worth it, I aimed for the highest goal known to me in my somewhat limited sphere. Thanks to a generous financial aid office, I will attend Radcliffe College this fall. I firmly believe that had it not been for GS, I not only would never have applied to this school, but would not have been ready to go had I applied anyway. For I go now, armed with a sense of my own worth and limits, and the realization that however much you think you know about a subject, there will always be, somewhere within earshot, someone who knows more.

So, besides giving me a much-needed jump in botany and biology, GS gave me a sense of worth and a sense of just how little I know. There's so much more to learn. GS took me, a rather frustrated person, jaded at seventeen (a fearsome thing in itself), and instilled a love of learning and association with my peers. Since GS, the only television I watch is a half-hour of Monty Python every Sunday night. I am so busy learning, picking up where GS left me off that there's little time for idleness. I thrive on my new, more carefully-cultivated friendships — GS showed me how to find friends who want more than a good time. I could go on for hours. . .

A young lady, now a sophomore at Duke University, expressed herself about the '74 school as follows:

FEELINGS ABOUT GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL
NUMBER TWO

As a fern uncurls in a cool radiant glade,
and reaches out to light and life,
So I uncurled, and reached out, and grew.
As tangled roots suck up moisture from the
pungent earth,
So I listened, and absorbed, and knew.
As ripples of water stretch
in ever-widening circles,
So my understanding expanded, too.
As rain spills down from pussywillow clouds,
So I cried when I said . . . adieu.

A student now attending Harvard University and majoring in Philosophy and the Classics took, as his independent project during the '74 Governor's School, a beginning of the translation of the New Testament from the original Greek to English. He successfully completed the first 13 chapters of St. Mathew. During the early summer, 1976, he wrote:

I have started studying Greek again this summer. I had put it aside since THAT summer. I'm starting Book I of the *Iliad*.

I have accomplished much haphazardly in two years. I mean that situations I'm in will bring realizations on me, rather than my working out such thoughts by thinking. I have come to the opinion that serious devotion to thinking is something which one can learn to improve and consciously guide, through intense effort (much as a concert pianist).

To this end, I propose to study in great depth at school and, on my own, a few thinkers who impress me. When I write I get the feeling that most of it is more relevant memories than the thoughts themselves, because expressing a thought well requires a control over language that I don't have — yet. (I shall struggle to get thoughts to fit into syntax.) As a result, there may be some important idea behind them, but tho' words do not express it, it is somewhere implied by them. These few thinkers who impress me so far, namely, Virginia Woolf, Ludwid Wittgenstein, J. P. Sartre, and Friedrich Neitzsche, these thinkers seem to select the essential from the tons of words floating in their heads, and write that. I want to learn this also — or die in the attempt.

Perhaps inevitably, I idealize my memories of GS somewhat, but I tend to consider my GS experience as a "gem in my heartscloth."

Another from '74 wrote, succintly, "I regreat that I have but one summer to give to my Governor's School."

A student attending Swarthmore College and a participant in the first Governor's School, '73, wrote:

My memories of the GS are all positive: the idyllic atmosphere, the interesting people, the non-stop schedule of activities. Although I have lost track of many of the friends I made there (as well as most of those I made in high school), I think of them fondly and retain some of their influences. In particular, I would like to mention Mrs. Casey Withers, my math teacher at GS, and Steve, the student whose room was next to me, whose enthusiasm for mathematics infected me and whom I consider the two main individual influences on my selection of a major in mathematics.

This leads naturally into college, a subject that begs

for explication but calls for condensation. After two years of desultory sampling, I have fallen (awkardly, I admit) into the Swarthmore Honors program, with major in math and minors in Russian and philosophy. Like everyone else, I wonder and worry about Life, the Future, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. As I once told my high school physics teacher, I am a scalar rather than a vector: all magnitude and no direction. "Perhaps," he said, "but if you worry about it you'll be tensor!" He was right: the conflict of idealism and pragmatism, aspiration and ability can result only in tension.

Of course, college has turned out differently than I expected during the good old GS days. I have not learned to think. Swarthmore accepted me under the assumption that I already had pretensions in that direction and, though I have picked up a nice smattering of fact and system, nothing has drastically rearranged my mental building-blocks since my matriculation. The real effects of college have been two:

1. my first year at Swarthmore wrung, threshed, and pounded out most of my eighteen year accumulation of hubris; and
2. in compensation, it introduced me to a few good-humored, intelligent, and articulate people.

I had a taste of category (2) at GS; fortunately, the GS does not buffet us with process (1).

Again from the '73 session, a student attending Haverford College and majoring in philosophy, shared this thought:

> Ben Bradlee of the *Washington Post* is fond of the phrase "non-denial denial." Governor's School showed me "non-learning learning." That is, I learned how to learn without the usual formality of strained informality of the classroom. You can close your eyes and smoke a cigarette in the evening, and listening, learning the sound, the rhythms and motions, — the silence —, and the violence of plain day-to-day living. That right there is just as much a laboring and a loving process as any academic's lifetime commitment. And, if anything, that statement elevates, rather than degrades any kind of serious academic pursuit.

A mathematics, physics, and astronomy major at the University of Virginia, is a remarkable young man, as you will probably agree, after hearing the following:

> Me? Oh, let's see — I'm a conservative Republican, an Echols Scholar at UVa, and a member of AFROTC. I dream about the future — mine and mankind's. I hope to see man leave the face of the Earth, and I'd like to play some part (however small) in that. And by leaving the face of the Earth, I don't just mean to the Moon; I mean to the Outer Planets and beyond the Solar System.
>
> On a more down-to-Earth scale (pardon the pun), I would like to help in a more important way. I've always had a flair for teaching (including individual tutoring), and the way to help Man is to help individuals. They say "and a child shall lead them." Who teaches them how to lead? All anyone can do is to try, and to spend time with people, show them someone cares, that they're not just Social Security Numbers in a computer. That's the way to help Man.
>
> I guess I'm just rambling, but I think there is something in there, somewhere. What it boils down to is that I'm an idealist — I want to help humanity — and the best way I see is to convince individuals of their humanity. This is my way of thanking you for the GS experience. It reminded me of my humanity, by showing me that there are people who care about us. It was one of the most rewarding experiences I've had, both academically and personally, for it opened my eyes to a lot. It formed bonds that survive to this day. When I got to UVa, I had **friends** there — friends I had made at GS in '73. I guess I wasn't as open, as much of participant as I could have been, but it was new to me, and I was taken by surprise. It took a while to open the shell I had spent years building around me, but GS did it.

Some of our participants are studying abroad. One of these, who is a student at Goddard College and a member of the '73 group, wrote:

> Since graduating from high school I have done many things. I worked in a dinner theatre — living there as a staff member. I lived and worked with a jazz band (I am also a singer). I moved to Colorado and worked there as a maid, as well as many other jobs. Then I decided to go to Goddard College. I have been studying there for four semesters now, one in a special theatre/music/dance program, one in regular residence, and now I am finishing my second non-residential term in Paris.
>
> I am studying mime here in Paris with Etienne Decroux, the father of modern mime. I am also writing, doing independent study in theatre and history, and studying French. The opportunity to do this kind of study is most amazing to me — I have learned so much in Paris. I live on basically a poverty level, in a small room on the eighth floor, with cold running water and a squat toilet down the hall. I play guitar and sing in the metro for extra money.
>
> This isn't exactly a dream, but it has been a very rewarding and much of a learning experience.
>
> The clearest effects of the Governor's School which I can see in my life are these: it was there that I developed a focus on my desire to write — I began work at writing and enjoy it, and thus I began to write well. The encouragement and teaching I got at GS definitely started me seriously on the road to writing. Secondly, it was at GS that I first learned enough about acting to want to begin working in that facet of theatre. I had been working as a technician for several years when I came to GS, but it was only after leaving there that I began to study acting and began to audition for and play parts.
>
> All in all, my experience with the GS was a good one.

22

and obviously, one that put a focus on my directions as an artist. It is hard to say whether or not I would have found these things on my own — eventually, I'm sure that I would have. But with the disenchantment that I was then experiencing with public schools, it was the best thing that could have happened to me. I'm only sorry that there is not real work going on to explore the faults that lie early on in the system — those that led me to lose interest in learning at the age of six, when I should have been starting to see the magic of books and schools and learning new things . . . I believe that it would be a very interesting experience to gather together as many of the original students as possible, for it is only after several years that we can really sit down and compare notes and realize just how far we have come over the last few years.

A charming young girl, who possesses an abundance of fine qualities characteristic of Governor's School students, expressed her feelings about the first Governor's School held at the Virginia Museum:

FOR ALL THE DYNAMIC MOMENTS

Time is a delicate flower
whose seeds are quickly blown off
with the passing winds
and settle, only as memories

One must grasp quickly as they fly by,
to learn.
The days I spent in a
house of beauty and
grace
were gone too soon,
and the people I touched and who
touched me
left me too suddenly,
but the thoughts they bestowed upon me
remain,
blossoming, flourishing,
treasured.

What finer gift could anyone give to a child of thoughts
than truth and knowledge?
What better memories could I have than those of
culture and majesty?

To me, there is only poetry and theatre.
To me, there are only people of grace or
Awkwardness.

In Richmond, to me, there was only
poetry and theatre and grace,
and maybe a few
secret, quiet tears
of departure.

What can I say,
except
thank you dear one,
for opening more
buds in my mind.

Yours, with a lot of love and admiration,

(signed)
(one of your "gifted" children)

"And in conclusion," in early July of this year, I received a response to our annual survey from a student at the University of Virginia. This young man intended his letter for all responsible for the Governor's School. Since I am the over-all contact person for the School, the student wrote to me on July 4, 1976. So deeply did this letter touch me that I want to share it with you.

Though procrastination is one of the more ignoble characteristics that I possess, in reference to this response to your June 7 letter, it was intentional.

In our nation's Bicentennial year we are constantly being reminded of the remarkable origins from whence it came. The date of July 4 has become both the symbol and culmination of much of the celebration, and it is in part because of this that I delayed writing to you until today.

I believe that America spawned, indeed, a new race of people; and that the new nation was as much an idea as a palpable political entity. The several traits which typified this new breed include the willingness to work and the willingness to learn. America's genius has been the deciding factor in its emergence as the greatest country the world has known.

Part of that "genius" is attributable to the American emphasis on freedom of education. Part of it is attributable to the wherewithal provided by our various governments for furthering the education of its people. I am very thankful for the educational opportunities which I have been given, and wish to thank you this day, as being one of the engineers of a singularly important moment in my learning experience. The Governor's School for the Gifted was and is a magnificent program. It changed my outlook and contributed to my maturation. I am certain that it helped me to become a Virginia representative at the 1975 William Randolph Hearst Senate Youth Program and an Echols Scholar at the University of Virginia. I have nothing but pleasant memories of that summer.

So, if I waited a long time in replying, it was with due cause. When you receive this letter the festivities of July 4 will be over, but I know that the spirit will linger. For, while some use this day to muster a perfunctory patriotic fervor, others — like you — are merely continuing habits of a lifetime. Bless you, Isabelle Rucker, and those like you.

You are what America is all about.

All my love and respect,
(signed)

Does Virginia have a commitment to gifted and talented

students? There is no doubt about it, in my mind. It will be some years hence before we can fully realize the positive effects that programs for the gifted have on the recipients, I trust that you agree with me that, at least, we have "broken the ground." With your help and support, we shall forge ahead in the future and provide even bigger and better programs for those students who are, indeed, our most valuable natural resource.

EDITORS NOTE:

Mrs. Rucker presented this paper to the Beta Zeta Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma on November 8, 1976 in Waynesboro, Virginia. It was submitted to READING IN VIRGINIA at the request of the editor.

Microworkshop
Reading to Learn: Techniques for Developing Critical Reading-Thinking Skills
Thursday, May 5
Fontainebleau Hotel, Champagne Room
Co-directors: Helen J. Castle and Jean A. Gillet, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

PRESSURE: A PROBLEM FACING READING TEACHERS

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What makes one child more successful in reading than another? One child with high interest and motivation may succeed, while another because of detrimental internal and external pressures may fail. Since the mental capacities for any two children are not equal, it follows that their rates of skill development will differ also. A child must develop the necessary skills for reading. To become proficient in reading the child must have many hours of meaningful experience. The unique experiences of each child can easily determine his success or failure as a reader; therefore the student's environment can aggravate reading problems.

The child may experience pressure from several areas. The parents seem to be the greatest source. Some parents push their child into reading before he is maturationally ready. Also, parents often set unrealistic goals. When the child does not measure up to his parents' expectations, he cannot escape feelings of disappointment and defeat. This is true even if the child has done his best to succeed.

Help is something the child may or may not receive from his parents. Some parents help too much while others who do not possess the necessary knowledge help too little. Needless to say, tutoring sessions can often result in emotional conflict and even physical violence, with the child being the recipient of the verbal or physical abuse.

Other siblings tend to be a source of competition for the frustrated child. Much too often, parents are repeating the old cliche, "Why can't you read like your brother (sister)?" This only makes matters worse. Thus the child feels worthless and inadequate. Eventually, he resents the playing of favorites by his parents; therefore, even if the other sibling could help, the child is not about to let his rival give him academic assistance.

Children within the same family tend to be very different, and some school administrators fail to recognize this. Even though their environment is the same, the siblings have experiences and innate abilities that vary. The school administrators may expect all children to learn at the same rate and achieve at comparable levels regardless of the diverse backgrounds involved. Obviously, this is an unrealistic expectation. Clearly, children from happy homes, virtually free from pressure, have a greater advantage over children from unhappy homes. Often children from unhappy homes are forced to cope with tremendous pressures.

Society, as well as administrators, places pressure on the child. Society expects its members to be educated and productive citizens. Since there is no place for the illiterate adult, reading is crammed down the child's throat whether he is ready for it or not. The world is designed for the literate. Can you imagine not being able to read a newspaper, a magazine, or a street sign. Reading surrounds the child from birth. How terrible this must be for the child who is a reading failure! He probably feels that the world is teasing and making fun of him.

Since there is no place for the illiterate adult, reading is crammed down the child's throat whether he is ready for it or not.

The teacher is another key source of pressure. Consistently, many teachers do not consider the individual differences of the pupils. They simply employ the blanket approach to the teaching of reading. These teachers are merely covering the material rather than uncovering it. Just because the child has gone from cover to cover in the basal reader does not mean that he has understood or even read

the material. The teacher is pressured to meet standards set up by administrators, society, other school systems, or other teachers. Consequently, teachers exert pressure on their pupils to achieve some arbitrary level of proficiency. Although the reasoning may not be valid, the pressure does exist and does constitute a problem.

The reading materials may cause the child to feel pressured. The material may be above or below the reading level causing the child to exhibit little or no interest. Thus reading material selection must be based on specific needs because all children do not have the same interest or ability. Some basal readers may contain more new words than the child can handle. Although the rate of new word introduction in the basal is static, it may be too fast; and the discouraged child may quit trying to comprehend the new words.

One major reason for the child's pressure on himself is the fear of rejection. First, he may be afraid of not reaching parental expectations. He fears that his parents will withdraw affection. Second, the child is afraid of being considered a failure by his peers. He may feel that he is the only one in class who cannot read; this will make him feel academically isolated. Therefore, the child begins to hide his problem if possible, maybe by pretending to read silently when in fact he cannot read. Embarassment keeps him from seeking help for his problem.

> Pressure can be a major factor in determining the success or failure of the child.

Pressure can be a major factor in determining the success or failure of the child. Therefore parents and teachers are the major contributors to the child's reading growth or retardation, whether they are aware of it or not. They can be of assistance rather than a hinderance to the child if they are concerned enough to work at solving the child's reading problem.

There are some basic considerations concerning pressure:

1. Parents should be available to help children, but they should not force the assistance. Parents should also provide the time and place for productive study.
2. Administrators should recognize the problems incurred when teachers deal with individual differences. Variability in the rate of achievement should be recognized and encouraged. Individual differences can only be dealt with when administrators assist teachers in changing methods and materials to meet the needs of the pupils.
3. Teachers should strive for optimum growth for each child. Pressures should not cause the teacher to neglect pupil needs.
4. Society must recognize that classroom learning varies quantitatively as well as qualitatively. Every child should be expected to achieve at his own unique rate. Society must understand that schools promote heterogeneity rather than homogeneity or conformity.

How might parents and teachers relieve pressure and tension? Doll and Fleming, in their book *Children Under Pressure*, suggest that parents and teachers help young people to know themselves better. Children need warm relationships with parents and educators to relieve inner tensions. A loving, helpful, encouraging relationship with the child is more desirable than one which is punishing and critical.

Good teaching and parenting can be combined to combat detrimental pressure. Teachers and parents must cooperate in bringing home and school closer together. Once the child feels comfortable in each setting, frustration and failure will be replaced by learning and achievement.

An Exceptional Star

Susan Hampshire, internationally known actress, has performed more than a hundred roles. She won Emmy awards in 1971 and 1972. Currently, she's captivating American television audiences as the quick-witted Glencora in *The Pallisers* on PBS.

And Susan Hampshire is a victim of dyslexia who was considered stupid as a child.

Born in London in the early 1940s, Susan found education agonizing — fraught with ridicule from other children.

Now in demand, Miss Hampshire relates that her impairment forces her to take ten times as long as other actors to get a script right. Anyone who watches Susan Hampshire move effortlessly through the demanding lead role in *The Pallisers* will find this hard to believe.

* * *

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Twenty-second Annual Convention
International Reading Association
May 2-6, 1977

Parents In Reading Programs
IRA Parents and Reading Committee
Monday, May 2
Miami Beach Convention Center, Room 101
"Are We on the Right Track?" Panel Discussion
Panelist: Principal, Mary E. Johnson, Hampton Public Schools, Hampton, Virginia

* * *

Open-Eden Discussion
Psycholinguistics and Reading
Tuesday, May 3
Miami Beach Convention Center, Room 102A
Panelist: Richard T. Graham, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia

KEYS TO BETTER READING - MAGIC AND MOTIVATION

Mrs. Jennie J. DeGenaro
Elementary Supervisor for
Special Programs
Henrico County Schools,
Highland Springs, Virginia

Dr. Morton Bradman
Assistant Superintendent for
Curriculum and Instruction
Henrico County Schools,
Highland Springs, Virginia

Generally, students who excel in reading are motivated to read. The spiral effect is in evidence. The better the student reads the more he wants to read, the more skillful he becomes, and the more he reads. This same maxim holds true for other activities as well, such as swimming, tennis or playing the piano.

> Thus, for many students, the "disability" may commence as a "motivational disability."

Thus, for many students, the disability" may commence as a motivational disability." The student's lack of interest, has precluded his spending time reading, which is necessary to become proficient. Instruction must be accompanied by practice, as the skills are taught to ensure skill mastery. For the student to get the practice he needs, he must do some of the work outside of school. Motivating the student to read, on his own time, becomes a major issue. Consequently, this lack of motivation is a major stumbling block.

Parents and teachers must work together on motivational strategies. Helping each student to become as proficient in reading as he is capable of becoming should be a common goal.

The following potpourri of suggestions are offered in the hope that they will motivate reluctant students to read while in school and during their recreational, or free time. Teachers should select those activities which fit the interests and abilities of their students. Also, ideas listed are only a beginning and should not be considered as a comprehensive list.

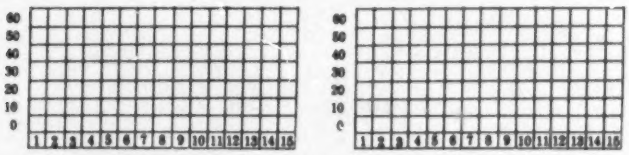
Motivational Strategies

1. The teacher duplicates a form depicting two grids. (See Table 1). This form is sent to the parents at least twice during the school year. Grids serve as a documentary of how much time the child is spending on reading and in watching television outside of school hours.

TABLE I.

READING Minutes

TELEVISION Minutes



Date:_____
Month

Name:_____ School:_____ Grade:____

Ask the parents to keep the chart as accurately as possible to reflect actual reading and viewing time. A period of two weeks should be sufficient for each time frame. Thus, the teacher will be able to determine whether the child spends more, or less time in reading pursuits during the school year. Also, these grids graphically illustrate to the parents how the child is spending his time.

2. A simple form sent to the parents stating the title of the book, date and the parent's signature should accompany each book the student takes home to read. This simply ensures that a dual check is being made on the child's outside reading and alerts the parent to the fact that some outside reading is expected daily. (Table II).

TABLE II.

_____
Title of Book Read

Comments:

_____ _____
Date Parent's Signature

3. In addition, the teacher should make a wall chart to reflect the books the children read in and out of class. (Table III). Charts may be as elaborate or simple as desired. A

simple "Book Worm" chart is as follows. Draw two inch squares to contain the book title and a simple line drawing. The drawing will indicate the month the book was read. For example, October could be represented by a Jack-O-Lantern, November by a turkey, December by a tree and so forth. Thus, the teacher can tell at a glance how many books each child read during a particular time frame.

TABLE III.

Book Worms					
Mary					
Joe					
Dot					

No student is penalized because of his reading deficit inasmuch as every book counts the same as another, regardless of the reading level of the book.

There should be some reward for every ten books, or so, that are read. Behavior that is not rewarded is often extinguished.

4. Make a practical "gift" for your parents of a list of items found in grocery stores. Students help the teacher think of items to add to the list. Categorize the items under main headings, such as vegetables, fruit, cleaning articles, and paper. Duplicate the list. Each parent is given a list for home use.

The parent is asked to check the items he wants to purchase. He then gives the list to the student to copy. To vary the procedure, the parent names an item, the student finds it on the list, and then writes the article named on his grocery list.

Explain to the parents the rationale and the need for involving the students in relevant activities which require reading and writing. These activities also accomplish the building of such skills as categorizing, visual discrimination and spelling. It also provides practice in reading and writing. In addition, responsibility is developed as the child becomes a contributing household member. (See Table IV).

TABLE IV

GROCERY LIST				
Paper	Cleaning	Fruit	Vegetables	Cereal
Napkins	Soap	Oranges	Corn	Cheerios
Cups	Cleanser	Pears	Peas	Corn Pops

5. Encourage students to read cereal boxes and labels on various products. Also, students find it interesting to write for free and inexpensive material which is advertised.

6. Students enjoy receiving mail. How about a pen pal exchange between two classes in the same school or school system? If you know a teacher in another part of the country, your students may want to exchange letters. Foreign pen pals are exciting for the more advanced students. Also, the itinerant teacher has a decided advantage in that she can serve as the "mail man" between several of her schools.

7. Rewrite directions for using school equipment. Use a simplified vocabulary and sentence structure format. Outline how to use such equipment as the movie projector, overhead projector and so forth. Students help by providing the teacher with their own organic vocabulary thereby making it easier for them to read. Mimeograph and book-blind additional copies. Let your students take these directions to other classes, read them and leave a set of directions for that room's use. In this way students are able to use equipment, unattended, by following the simple directions they must read. Also, the students who assisted in writing the directions have had a valuable experience in using reading as a relevant project.

Also, the itinerant teacher has a decided advantage in that she can serve as the "mail man" between several of her schools.

8. Arrange for rewards for reading. Studies in psychology tell us that those acts which are positively reinforced tend to be repeated. Some students respond to a social, "that's good" reinforcer. Others require tangible, synthetic reinforcers such as candy or a small toy. Some students may read a book for the privilege of playing a game or to buy fifteen minutes on the typewriter. A knowledge of the student enables the teacher to provide that which is truly rewarding for each child. The key here is to use extrinsic rewards for reading until reading becomes intrinsically rewarding in and of itself. Certificates and gold stars are also extremely motivational for some students.

9. A little excitement may be introduced by way of a "treasure hunt." Students will be extremely motivated to read directions when there is a "treasure" to be found. The treasure may be a "good luck" penny for each child, a piece of candy or other small treat. Write the directions in rhyme and the students will enjoy the activity all the more.

Write the first direction on the blackboard. If you are not commencing with the treasure hunt, cover it with a piece of construction paper until the moment arrives. Suspense is also built by using a gimmic such as this. Your first direction may read something like this:

"Look in the tall, green plant and you will see,
the directions to a treasure for you and me."

Students are highly motivated to read words such as "directions" and "treasure" when the proper groundwork is laid. The students find directions which tell them where to look next until the treasure is located. You may have the students look in seven or eight places before the final treasure is located.

10. A "compliment Tree" can do wonders for a classroom as well as to motivate students to read. Write a short message inside a strip of paper or on a construction paper leaf. Write the student's name on the opposite side and tape it to the tree. The "tree" may be nothing more than a branch sprayed silver or gold and stuck in a pail of sand or plaster of paris. Messages should compliment the student on a particularly thoughtful act or the accomplishment of a particular skill. Students are extremely motivated to read when the message concerns them in a positive manner. Also, they will ask if they may take *their* compliment home to read to their parents. Later, students may be encouraged to write messages to each other. These are also taped to the tree. This "Compliment Tree" is performing several functions - motivating students to read and write as well as encouraging positive self-concepts and mannerly behavior. Also, students acquire the habit of looking for the positive in their peers rather than the negative.

11. Encourage students to write thank you letters to room mothers, principals or whoever does something for them. If they desire, students should have an opportunity to read their letters to the group before mailing.

12. Many students will be motivated to write stories and poems when they know their writing will be bound into a book and placed in the library. There are many good reference books which give step-by-step directions for book binding which can easily be accomplished in the classroom.

13. Book reports should be kept simple. Some students find giving reports unpleasant while others especially like to share a book they have particularly enjoyed. A "Book Club," with optional membership, which meets weekly for a half hour is motivating for many students. The Junior Great Books is especially recommended for students whose reading skills are somewhat better than average.

14. To foster a love of books, encourage students to serve as the "Librarian's Helper." Students should have time to browse through the books as well as help with the clerical duties. Also, why not ask a student, who reads well, to read a story to the group rather than reserving this privilege for the librarian. Peer modeling is extremely effective.

15. Use "Magic" card tricks in your teaching. Regular card tricks can often be modified and used for reading. Use a blank set of cards to write the basic sight or other words in place of the numbers generally found on playing cards. Phonic rummy cards may also be used. Almost any "Book of Magic Card Tricks" will furnish ideas for these activities.

16. Peer tutoring enhances the self-concept of the tutor and often is an incentive to better and improved reading. The tutor does not have to be a "top reader" to do a really fine job. Teaching a skill to another ensures mastery of the skill by the tutor and the other student (tutee) is also learning.

Conclusions

Reading can, and should, be made relevant. Reasons for reading should be provided in which there is a real need for the student to receive a message. Writing should also accompany reading and the reasons for writing can be purposeful. Reinforcement, at home and at school, should be provided. Teachers and parents, working together, should see better results than when either is attempting the task of encouraging the reading habit alone.

The simple strategies listed, when used, enliven a reading program for both the teachers and the students.

Motivating students takes time, thought, imagination and sometimes a "little bit of magic."

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Twenty-second Annual Convention
International Reading Association
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Session
Developing Parent Awareness and Involvement in Remedial Reading Programs
Wednesday, May 4
Miami Beach Convention Center, Room 105
"Disseminating Remedial Reading Program Activities: The Use of Film and Other Media"
Brian D. Shirley, Augusta County Public Schools

* * *

Session
The Effective Utilization of Human Resources
Wednesday, May 4
Miami Beach Convention Center, Room 159
"A Documentary Video Presentation of Hunt Valley School's Parent Volunteer Program"
Chairing: Dolores Lawrence Fairfax County Public Schools
Speaker: Sally Hottle, Fairfax County Public Schools, Fairfax, Virginia

* * *

Session
Affective Factors and Reading Comprehension: Locus of Control
Friday, May 6
Miami Beach Convention Center, Room 102B
Chairing: Victor I. Culver, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia
"The Relationship of Locus of Control to Reading Achievement" Victor I. Culver, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia
"Locus of Control and Reading Comprehension: Applications for the Classroom" Raymond F. Morgan, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia

EFFECTS OF TEACHERS' RESPONSE STRATEGIES ON CHILDREN'S ORAL READING PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF INTERFERENCE?

Dr. Jerome A. Niles
Dr. John C. Winstead
Dr. Richard T. Graham
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

This study was conducted to investigate the degree to which teacher correction strategies improve or impair children's oral reading performance. Sixty-four students, four grade levels, 16 in each, were compared on the basis of their oral reading under two distinct conditions, free and corrected. A Kruskal-Wallace one-way ANOVA revealed no significant differences due to order of treatment and according to the Mann-Whitney U test no significant difference was found between treatment groups. However, differences in amount of words read favored the free condition and are supportive of recent suggestions relating to the psycholinguistic explanation of the reading process.

Recent observations have suggested to interested reading practitioners that certain traditional practices are for the most part either non-productive or interfering (Goodman 1967, Smith 1971). This investigation grew from questions raised both for and against certain present theories and practices underlying today's reading programs. While recent psycholinguistic assertions are not necessarily new psychologically nor linguistically, the emphasis on reading as a process rather than sequentially controlled set of "skills" is. Intrinsic to the psycholinguistic description of the reading process is the position of imprecision verses precision in the teaching and learning of reading. Psycholinguistic contributions have focused on the language process as the primary ingredient to the acquisition of literacy rather than the traditional precise translation emphasis which is the bases for nearly all presently adopted school reading programs.

Strategies for reading instruction for daily classroom activities are influenced by the particular practitioner's definition of successful reading which is predominately precision based (Anderson and Dearborn 1952). This view heavily emphasizes skill development and mastery of sequenced instruction in pieces. Traditional programs and their accompanying teaching strategies are suggested by psycholinguists as being counter productive. The challenge is in fact to the teachability of reading (Smith 1971, Stephens 1974). The question in theory and in program is who teaches a child to read - the teacher or the child? The question raised for this study is: Whether presently used correctional techniques for teaching reading result in improved reading accuracy or in reality cause psycholinguistic interference?

Procedures

Population and sample: The population from which the sample was selected was from a group of second, third, fourth, and fifth grade children attending six different suburban schools. The children were in the average reading group in their respective grade levels. The sample consisted of 64 children randomly selected, 16 from each grade level.

Examiners: The examiners were 64 student teaching interns participating in the second phase of a three phase year-long student teaching experience and were evaluating children's reading performance in connection with a requirement for the third course in the diagnosis of reading problems. The examiners received three hours of training in groups of 10 or 11 for the purpose of recording oral reading errors. Errors considered were omissions, substitutions, insertions, mispronunciations (excluding dialect--for example, *git* for *get*), word order repetitions (one or more words), and words supplied due to student hesitation or on student request. The 64 examiners were assigned randomly to the 64 members of the sample.

Task: The Ss read orally for three consecutive five minute intervals totaling 15 minutes during which the Es marked the number of errors and noted the total number of words read for each five minute interval. The reading material for each S was the basal reader from the same publishing company used in his or her classroom reading group, beginning with the third story selection from the end of the book.

The five minute intervals were represented by one of two conditions. The free condition (F) is described as a period of 5 minutes in which the E listened to the S read without E responding with correction or praise, except to supply a word after a 5 second hesitation or if asked by S. E recorded this assistance as an error. The corrected condition (C) is described as a period of 5 minutes in which E listened to S read and interjected "What's that?" in a neutral voice each time S made an error. E, in the corrected condition, was also allowed to supply a word under the same constraints as described in the free condition.

Four arrangements of the free and corrected conditions were constructed across the three time intervals to test for the occurence of any effects caused by order of treatment. These four arrangements allowed for equal representation of the F and C conditions for each five minute interval and accounted for the various sequential effects of one or two conditions preceding or following any given condition (that is FCF, CFC, CCC and FFF). Ss and their examiners were assigned randomly by grade level to each order of the

conditions, 16 Ss per condition.

Data were treated as proportions of the number of errors over the number of words read. A Kruskal-Wallace one-way analysis of variance was used to test for the order effect and a Mann-Whitney-U was used to determine the significant difference between the F and C condition (Siegel 1956).

Results

The Kruskal-Wallace one-way ANOVA revealed no significant differences between the four orders of FCF, CFC, CCC and FFF $p > .05$ (Siegel 1956). Since no order effect was present, the data for the two distinct conditions of F and C were treated homogeneously as two independent samples without attention to order of occurences. No significant difference was found between the F and C based on a comparison made by the Mann-Whitney-U test $p > .05$ (Siegel 1956). In other words, the Ss in the two conditions did not significantly differ in their reading accuracy whether they were prompted by the teacher or not.

While the quantitative analysis of the two samples suggests similarity, a descriptive examination of the number of errors by the number of words read suggests certain other insights into reader performance under the two conditions examined. Table 1 demonstrates that for the total group the mean number of errors is lower for the C condition ($\overline{X} = 20.42$) than for the F condition ($\overline{X} = 23.61$). However, this difference of 3.19 errors occurs at the expense of the mean number of words read. The F condition is characterized by a higher mean number of words read ($\overline{X} = 444.86$) over the 15 minute time period while the C condition indicates fewer words read ($\overline{X} = 376.82$). The greater mean number of words read in the F condition as compared to the C condition ($\overline{X} = 68.04$) accounts for a 16.5 per cent difference.

Table 1 indicates also that these differences in errors and words read are maintained over primary grade readers, second and third, and intermediate grade readers, fourth and fifth. The mean difference in errors by primary readers is less in the C condition ($\overline{X} = 1.46$) as it is for the intermediate readers ($X = 5.11$). The mean difference in words read favors the F condition for both primary ($\overline{X} = 52.62$) and intermediate ($\overline{X} = 83.46$) readers. The percentage of difference for the total number of words read is greater for the F condition for primary and intermediate readers by 15 and 17 per cent respectively.

Discussion

Two oral reading conditions, free and corrected were used in this investigation. Free condition involved no oral teacher feedback except supplying words upon student request. The corrected condition approximated classroom instruction in terms of the frequency of teacher oral feedback provided the reader; each error was brought to the reader's attention, therefore termed the corrected condition. However, the reader did not obtain "correction information" from the teacher; he simply received an indication that his response did not correspond to the stimulus of the printed page. The

TABLE 1
MEANS FOR ERRORS AND TOTAL NUMBER OF WORDS READ FOR THE FREE AND CORRECTED CONDITIONS

	Errors			Words Read		
Grade	F	C	Mean Difference	F	C	Mean Difference
2nd & 3rd	20.0	18.54	1.46	379.37	326.75	52.62
4th & 5th	27.22	22.31	5.11	510.35	426.89	83.46
Total	23.61	20.42	3.19	444.86	376.82	68.04

F = Free C = Corrected

corrected condition in this study then represents a *minimal* amount of teacher instructional correction, as compared to usual classroom practice which typically includes consistent corrective efforts from both teacher and reading group members.

Results of this initial investigation, while formative rather than summative in intent, suggested teacher oral correction of reading error (divergence from the printed page) was no more effacious than non-correction of reading errors in reducing the percentage of errors observed by average readers reading grade level basal materials in grades 2-5. Further, this correction strategy reduced reading efficiency by causing significantly fewer words to be read, 16.5 per cent, under the corrected condition.

There are two reasons for the reduction of reading efficiency in the corrected condition. Although the corrected condition represents a minimal amount of teacher correction time related to regular classroom strategies for correction, teacher correction time does of course slow down the reading process. More importantly, teacher correction interfers with and detracts from the reader's processing of language and prevents his best use of self-correction strategies (Goodman, K. and Niles, O. 1970).

More importantly, teacher correction interferes with and detracts from the reader's processing of language and prevents his best use of self-correction strategies

Reader self-correction strategies for errors in oral reading seem unrelated to orally rectifying immediate errors. The particular strength of reading phrases and sentences rather than isolated words is the power of meaning as a determiner of word, phrase or sentence validity.

Insistence on *immediate* error correction most likely interferes with holistic correction strategies based on the contextual environment of words in meaningful running text. Correction strategies being universally cognitive, dictate no need to return to the scene of the so-called crime if meaning remains clearly intact.

Miscue research has indicated (Goodman, Y. and Burke 1972) that the more important aspect of oral reading "errors" is qualitative rather than quantitative. This research suggests that even with no consideration of qualitative differences in miscues, teachers who provide constant correction of oral reading are hindering the child's natural tendency to try to make sense of the reading environment and interferes with attempts to obtain meaning from the printed page. Constant teacher interruption works against the fact that the larger the amount of text read, the greater the opportunity for the reader to use the redundant features of language as it relates to structure and meaning as represented in running text.

Of final significance, increased experience with text provides the beginning and maturing leader with the implicit prerequisites which are the only way to increase the internalization of any and all of the so-called "skills' necessary to the acquisition of literacy.

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Twenty-second Annual Convention
International Reading Association
May 2-6, 1977

Preconvention Institute
No. 15
Unravelling Some Knotty Problems Of Severely Disabled Older Readers
Monday, May 2 - Tuesday, May 3
Miami Beach Convention Center Room 204
Chairing Betty H. Yarborough, Old Dominion University
Pinpointing Reading Competencies and Personal Needs" Carmelita K. Williams, Norfolk State College, Norfolk, Va.
Word Recognition and Related Difficulties (Accurary, Fluency, etc.)
Carol C. Raper, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va.
Process Skills for Effective Word Recognition (Visual Perceptual Skills, Visual Memory, etc.) Betty H. Yarborough, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va.
Survival Skills — The Minimum Essentials" Carmelita K. Williams, Norfolk State College, Norfolk, Va.
Interactive Reading: A Modified Language Experience Approach" Betty H. Yarborough, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va.

MODALITY PREFERENCES AND READING ACHIEVEMENT - A REVIEW

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What is the best way to teach reading? What a ridiculous question to ask! The answer most often given in academic circles is that no single method or approach is best for teaching all children how to read. The method has to be tailored to the individual child. What does that mean? Of course, every child is a different and complex entity. But does it also mean that students differ in perceptual processing and should be taught through the modality that functions most adequately to support cognitive learning?

Turaids, Wepman, and Morency (1972) concluded that the primary modalities for learning, the visual and the auditory pathways, develop independently. Morency (1968) stated that within each modality, discrimination and recall have their own independent development and are mature by age nine. Morency and Wepman (1973) have presented evidence which suggested that many children whose perceptual development is slow do not ever catch up in achievement.

The research available to support the practice of matching modality preferences to corresponding treatment is characterized by much ambiguity and confusion. There are more questions being asked than there are answers being given. Blanton (1971) and Wolpert (1971) have revealed the need for more empirical evidence that there really are visual, auditory,and kinesthetic learners, and that knowledge of a child's preferred learning modality with corresponding treatment increases the efficiency of teaching reading.

Can learning modalities be identified on a large scale basis with reliable, valid, and objective group tests? Which activities are best for which groups of students? What is the relationship between perceptual abilities as measured by tests of perception and an individual's ability to use a certain modality in a reading task? Stated differently, if a child is a "visual" learner because of his score on a visual perceptual test, will "visual" activities result in more effective learning by that child? These are pertinent questions that have not been adequately answered in experimental research.

Can learning modalities be identified on a large scale basis with reliable, valid, and objective group tests?

In an effort to answer these questions, experimental studies were reviewed that used beginning readers and real words.

Research in Matching Modality to Method

Bateman (1968) attempted to differentiate instruction and match it to modality. He identified auditory and visual learners in the first grade by using subtests of the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities. Half of the auditory and half of the visual learners received instruction emphasizing phonics. The other half received instruction by the look-say method. At the end of the year subjects taught by a phonic approach, whether classified as an auditory or visual learner, made significantly greater improvement in reading. Robinson (1972) questioned whether this investigation gave insights into the learning styles of children, or whether it was a methods-comparison study.

Daniel and Tacker (1974) also used subtests from the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities and subtests from the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude to identify visual and auditory learners. Auditory treatment included CVC trigrams pronounced and spelled distinctly. Visual treatment involved photographed trigrams mounted on slides and shown on an automatic slide projector. Results indicated that recall was significantly better when the stimuli were presented through the preferred sensory modality.

Lilly and Kellerher (1973) identified auditory and visual learners by presenting an increasing number of words in the subjects' basic sight vocabulary and requiring students to say the words in the order presented. The words were presented visually and orally. Subjects reading at 2.5 or above were then asked to read and listen to stories from Level 2 of the Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty, and to repeat back all the facts remembered. A significant interaction was reported between modality strength and mode of presentation of stories. The question is whether or not these findings can be generalized to the process of learning how to read.

Ringler and Smith (1973) used the Visual and Auditory Subscales from the New York University Learning Modality Test to identify modality preferences. Visual treatment involved the teaching of words in the primary grade children's speaking vocabularies by using transparencies and emphasizing configuration. Auditory activities included listening to the words in isolation, in context, and listening to initial, medial, and final sounds. There were no significant differences in achievement reported between students who were instructed according to their preferred modality and those that were not.

Robinson (1972) identified auditory and visual learners in a longitudinal study through third grade and investigated differences when subjects were taught according to a sight approach and a Hay-Wingo phonic approach. Visual learners were identified by matching identical pictures, pictures with reversals and by matching and completing geometric forms. Auditory learners were identified using the Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test. Neither method surpassed the other among subjects with strong or weak modalities.

Subjects with strong visual and auditory modalities scored highest in reading achievement at the end of first and third grades. Subjects with both modalities low scored lowest. Those with a discrepancy between auditory and visual modalities score between the two extremes. There was no significant interaction among visual and auditory modalities and phonic and sight methods of teaching beginning reading.

Conclusions

Little is provided in these studies that yields conclusive answers to the questions posed. The questions were addressed, however, with the data from these studies at hand.

First, are there really visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners? Of these five experimental studies available in the literature, regardless of the procedures used to identify different perceptual strengths, all the investigators demonstrated that subjects seem to have preferred modalities, and that these can be identified.

Wepman (1971) has suggested that 25 per cent of entering school children might need special instruction because of wide differences in modality preferences. Robinson (1972) found that approximately 25 per cent did score low on tests of both modalities, but only 11 per cent revealed a marked discrepancy between learning modalities. In the studies published by Ringler and Smith (1973), Lilly and Kellerher (1973), and Daniel and Tacker (1974), percentages of students demonstrating discrepancies between visual and auditory modalities were 25 per cent, 19 per cent, and 16 per cent respectively. Most students do not have strongly preferred modalities, and learn by whatever means they are taught.

The various subtests used to identify preferred modalities were varied, and most required individualized administration. The subtests used in the studies are most likely too cumbersome to be used widely in the classroom. A veritable need exists for a rapid and reliable screening test to identify children with strong modality preferences.

Most students do not have strongly preferred modalities, and learn by whatever means they are taught.

Do these tests adequately measure the variables deemed essential for success in reading according to research? Do the visual and auditory treatments in these studies correspond to these essential variables? General weaknesses are inherent in the investigation to date. The assignment of subjects to treatment groups has been somewhat arbitrary. Some studies appear to have been a comparison of methods rather than investigations into the learning styles of students. Some prevent generalizing because of small numbers in treatment groups. Daily classroom instruction was not limited to experimental treatments in some cases, thus making it difficult to determine what activites actually influenced the results. Most of the studies were not sufficiently encompassing to allow generalization to normal classroom procedures.

Does knowledge of a child's preferred learning modality with corresponding treatment increase the efficiency of teaching reading? Much research is required both in a controlled laboratory setting and in the classroom before a firm conclusion can be reached. Probably never before in the field of reading has a seemingly logical position been taken more widely in favor of a particular teaching technique with such a sparsity of evidence and effort to warrant definite conclusions.

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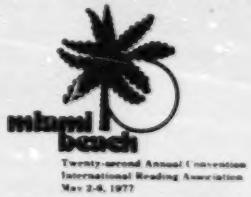

EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF READING IN THE CONTENT AREAS
ERIC/RCS REVIEW

Dr. William H. Rupley
Texas A&M University

The responsibilities and the role of public education are topics often debated among academicians, teachers, and parents. However, one responsibility we should all be able to agree to is the responsibility to help students succeed in life.

The importance of an individual's ability to apply learning to real-life situations is substantiated by Eileen E. Sargent: "A person has learned effectively when he can do well, whatever his work is, and succeed in life as a whole. No matter how many facts a person has, unless he can use those facts in doing his work well, in living happily, and in getting along well in life generally, he has not learned anything worthwhile" (ED 075 801, p. 1). Admittedly, no teacher can prepare individuals for all of the various situations they will encounter in life, but teachers can encourage students to seek out and take advantage of opportunities for living a more fulfilling life.

Learning is most often initiated in our schools through reading. The role that reading plays in learning becomes progressively more important as students move through the grades. But even in elementary schools, most of what students learn is accomplished through reading. Students read not only during their assigned reading period, but also in the content areas of the curriculum. Teachers generally give assignments in content areas by telling the students what to read and encouraging them to study what is read. But if students are not instructed about **how** to read in these content areas as well as **what** to read, then studying becomes, for many, a task of merely turning the pages.

Even with the admonishment of reading authorities that every teacher is a teacher of reading, many teachers believe that reading instruction is the responsibility of the reading teacher. This attitude is more pronounced in the secondary schools, but it also pervades the elementary school where too many teachers make a distinction between learning to read and reading to learn. Since reading instruction must be viewed as a total process, the teaching of a reading skill must provide opportunities for transfer and application of that skill. If this viewpoint is accepted by teachers, then teaching reading in the content areas is not only reading to learn, but also is an extension of reading instruction. Even though students approach studying in many different ways, the foundation for effective reading in the content areas must be laid in the elementary grades.

> . . . teaching reading in the content areas is not only reading to learn, but also is an extension of reading instruction.

One apparent difficulty for the elementary teacher who is concerned about being an effective teacher of reading in the content areas is that most research and resource materials focus on the secondary grades. However, there are a few papers and curriculum guides that deal primarily with the general concerns and philosophy of content reading in the elementary grades. In addition, some information about elementary social studies, science, and math is available to promote the effective teaching of content reading at the elementary level.

The specific demands that effective reading in the content areas places on teachers as well as on students are discussed by W. John Harker (ED 089 198). Teachers must realize that students, if they are to comprehend effectively, must first be taught how to analyze particular comprehension tasks in order to determine the specific thinking processess necessary for the solution of these tasks. Harker does not separate the teaching of reading skills and the applicaiton of reading skills into individual teaching activities. He suggests that instead of teaching specific comprehension skills in an abstract, formalistic manner separated from the immediate demands of content area reading, it is more realistic to teach students a flexible, generalized approach to comprehension tasks which can be applied directly in a variety of contextual settings. The specific demands of content area reading require students to apply comprehension skills in different ways, depending on the nature of the content material being read and the purpose for reading it.

In the specific content areas of social studies, math, and science, several authorities have provided important guidelines and considerations for reading instruction.

A review of the research in reading in the social studies by Thomas H. Estes singled out three problems areas: the reading skills necessary for achievement in the social studies, the strategies for teaching these skills,and the readability problems that social studies texts present to students (ED 065 829). From the research he reviewed, Estes concluded that there are three basic reading skills necessary for social studies achievement: vocabulary knowledge; comprehension of both a literal and a critical nature; and study skills, such as the abilities to read maps, to use references, to use indexes and tables of contents, to use the dictionary, and to read graphs, charts, and tables. Estes concluded that the most effective approach to improving both social studies achievement and reading abilities has been through the use of a content-centered approach, but that there needs to be further clarification of the skills necessary for achievement in order to effectively teach reading in the social studies class. In the area of readability problems, the major conclusion he reached was that it is difficult to assess the readability of social studies materials due to the inability of the assessment formulas to measure the concept load. This conclusion can serve as a warning to teachers about the overuse of readability

formulas.

A synthesis of literature on reading in mathematics by Wesley N. Earp reveals a broad foundation of research on which to base instruction in those reading skills important in mathematics achievement (ED 036 397). Earp stresses that the vocabulary of mathematics texts generally runs at readability levels higher than the performance levels of students in the grades in which the texts are used and that the vocabulary of mathematics does not greatly parallel or overlap that of the reading texts. This aspect of mathematics texts had important ramifications for both students and teachers (ED 036 397). Teachers must instruct students in special word attack skills and vocabulary for mathematics comprehension. In addition, teachers need to recognize that mathematics reading material is conceptually packed with a high density factor which requires at least three kinds of reading adjustment: adjustment to a slower rate than is used for nonmathematical materials, varied eye movement including types of regressive eye movements, and intentional rereading. Further, Earp indicates that because two or three sets of symbolic meaning may be involved within one context, students' vocabularies must include technical words, signs, and symbols. Students must read to grasp total ideas, sequences of ideas, and relationships among ideas.

...the vocabulary of mathematics texts generally runs at readability levels higher than the performance levels of students in the grades in which the texts are used.

As in social studies and mathematics, the content area of science requires specific reading skills necessary for comprehending and interpreting information. Leo Fay believes that there are several foundations on which successful reading in the content area of science is based (ED 086 960). The first foundation is the understanding of both the objectivity of science and the scientific method built upon that objectivity. Fay suggests that "...the student needs to understand the scientist's procedure of defining a problem, developing a hypothesis for the solution of the problem, and subjecting the hypothesis to rigorous testing" (p. 61).

The second foundation identified by Fay is vocabulary development, through which a child not only is confronted with a broad and rapidly growing technical vocabulary, but also must deal with symbolic language and abbreviations. To void the use of technical terms would be an error on the part of the teacher. The major characteristics of scientific writing, clarity and preciseness, make the use of technical terms essential.

The third foundation is the specialized application of various comprehension, interpretation, and study skills. The student needs to develop skills for locating information, organizing material, determine significant facts, and applying generalizations to new situations.

Although science, math, and social studies are considered separate disciplines, one common factor for reading and studying in the areas pervades the literature. That factor is the importance for students of having a systematic means of reading and studying the materials. The most often recommended method of study is SQ3R, which encourages the students to survey, question, read, recite, and review the material.

The survey step encourages students to look through the complete reading selection before beginning to read, taking note of typographical and format cues that might be of assistance in reading the material. Included among these cues are boldface type, pictures, illustrations, charts, maps, diagrams, sub-headings, italics, summaries, and questions. The second step is to question, basing questions on the subheadings or boldfaced type in the reading selection. The third step of the SQ3R method, reading the selection, focuses on reading to answer the questions and to identify the main points of the reading material rather than specific facts or details. Following the reading of the assignment students are to immediately go back over the lesson and answer the questions orally. The fifth step, prior to an exam or discussion, is review of those areas of the material which students may have forgotten.

The most often recommended method of study is SQ3R, which encourages the students to survey, question, read, recite, and review the material.

Through the use of a formula such as SQ3R, both students and teachers have a means for making reading in a content area better serve learning so that reading does not become the task of just turning the pages.

The teaching of reading in the content areas is too important to be deferred until the secondary level. In addition, instruction should not be dichotomized into teaching reading skills during one period and teaching a subject or content during other periods. Such a formalized approach defeats one of the goals of teaching reading--to develop the ability to comprehend and read a wide variety of written material. Developing students' reading skills should be an ongoing activity throughout the school day. When social studies, math, science, and language arts are being taught, reading should be taught as well.

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Using The Eric System

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miami beach

Twenty-second Annual Convention
International Reading Association
May 2-6, 1977

Session
Mainstreaming Children with Extreme Learning Problems through Diagnostic and Prescriptive Programing
Thursday, May 5
Miami Beach Convention Center Room 103B
Chairing: Patricia King, Virginia Beach Public Schools, Virginia Beach, Virginia

* * *

Microworkshop
Using Peer Tutoring Effectively
Thursday, May 5
Miami Beach Convention Center, Room 152
Resource Persons: Nancy Boraks and David O. Saunders, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia

Symposia
Developmental and Cognitive Aspects of Learning to Spell with Implications for Teaching and Diagnosis
Thursday, May 5
Fontainebleau Hotel, Le Ronde Room
Chairing: Edmund H. Henderson, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia
"Diagnostic Analyses of Spelling Competence and Word Concept Development Activities," Speakers: Elizabeth Tucker, J. Richard Gentry, Edmund H. Henderson, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

* * *

Session
Teaching Strategies for Developing Comprehensive Abilities
Thursday, May 5
Fontainebleau Hotel, West Ballroom
Chairing: James D. Mullins, Fairfax County Public Schools, Fairfax, Virginia

KATHLEEN DOWDY
NEWPORT NEWS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
VSRA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Mrs. Ruth Hawkins
Public Information Coordinator
Newport News Public Schools
Newport News, Virginia 23606

Kathleen (Kathy) Dowdy firmly believes that you can get practically anything out of children in the classroom if you're willing to work at it.

Her own willingness to work at it has earned for her the distinction of being named an "Outstanding Teacher of the Year" by the Virginia State Reading Association.

Kathy teaches first grade at Newsome Park Elementary School, an inner city school in the Newport News Public Schools, and her classroom is made up primarily of children from low income families. But she has such confidence in the abilities of her students that her enthusiasm is contagious.

"These children are lacking many experiences," she says. "But that doesn't mean you have to lower your standards and expect less out of them. You can give them the experiences they are missing. It might mean you work twice as hard, but it's 10 times more rewarding."

The lack of language experience makes teaching reading especially difficult, she admits. "How can you teach them to read words that they never really speak? You try to teach them to read sentences, and they don't know how to speak yet in sentences. So you have to go way, way back."

To provide them with these experiences and build up their vocabularies, Kathy brings a number of resources into the classroom. Her room is often filled with people--parents, volunteers, resource people and students from other classrooms--who share experiences and interests with the students to let them hear, feel, taste, touch or smell new things.

In addition, Kathy and her husband, Jim, who is stationed at Ft. Monroe in Hampton, take her class on special trips, including weekend picnics, visits to military bases or stops at shopping centers. ("Would you believe some of my students have never even been to a shopping mall!"

The involvement of parents is particularly important, but you have to really work at it, says Kathy, who has been highly successful in gaining parent cooperation at Newsome Park. "You can't always just pick up the phone and say, 'Hey, I'm having these kinds of problems. Can you help me?' Parents work or they don't have a phone, and it may mean you have to ring doorbells and go out and get them, but if you really want that involvement, you can get it."

She is quick to point out that it's not that parents aren't willing to become involved. "Often, they fear their own inadequacies, so you have to kind of build them up, too, and give them the confidence they need. You have to say, 'We are really interested in your child. Let's work together."

In teaching children to read, Kathy emphasizes that they have to want to learn to read. They have to learn to listen and they have to develop an extensive oral vocabulary before they can go ahead and read. "That sounds great on paper, but it takes a lot of time and work from a lot of people."

One of Kathy's on-going projects for building vocabularies is a word bank which her husband built for the classroom. Her children each have their own decorated safe deposit box in which they place all the words they know. The containers are stored in the large bank, with the idea that if students continue adding to their savings accounts, they will become rich in words.

"Granted, many of their words are just sight words that they have memorized," she says, 'but that's okay. It builds up their confidence in their ability to read, and that's important."

The students use their words in their regular lessons instead of words they are not familiar with. They may divide them into syllables or group them for learning initial

consonants or for learning other reading skills.

"They have some really crazy words in their banks, "Kathy says. "But as they work with them, they are developing reading skills,and eventually it all starts to click--hopefully!"

She points to an example of one student in her classroom who had only one word in his bank for months--"Clorox." Finally he began adding words for other things he had seen around the house. "He had the worst conglomeration of words! But all of a sudden he realized that Clorox started the same way as some of the other words in his bank."

In building their language skills, Kathy and her class also read a story together each day. If they don't like the way a story ends, they make up a new ending to suit themselves. And if they're not advanced enough to read a story to the class, they can tell a story and their teacher shows them how to write the words they have used.

"It's a fun thing we do each day," Kathy says. "They know they can do anything or go anywhere through a book or a story. And it's building that desire to read."

She also claims that it's amazing how much you can do to teach basic skills through music. "Everyone loves music, so we do things like changing the words of a song and making it an addition problem."

Actually, she is willing to try just about anything to reinforce a lesson. Textbooks are necessary, she readily agrees, but you've got to reach the students, and it takes a lot more than books.

If she's teaching the initial sound of "s," it's not unusual for her to show up in the classroom wearing her "super socks." If her students are studying word families and have doubts about whether "gill" is a word, she doesn't hesitate to run to another classroom and scoop a fish out of the aquarium.

Her willingness to experiment and try new things is obviously part of her nature. After graduating in 1964 from Ladycliff College in New York and teaching in that state for six years in an upper middle class neighborhood, she suddenly developed the urge to teach in Europe.

"In New York, I had it made," she admits. "I had kids who had everything that money could buy, an aide and lots of time for planning. But if there's such a thing as a good rut, I guess I was in it."

Not knowing who or where to write, Kathy simply addressed her request for an overseas position to "The Pentagon." After discovering that her request was past the deadline for application, she dismissed the idea and was amazed a few months later to receive a telegram saying "You have 48 hours to make up your mind whether you want to take a teaching job in Germany."

She went--not knowing where she would teach or what she would be teaching. As luck would have it, she landed a job in the first grade at Oberammergau, one of the more coveted teaching assignments in a picturesque area of Germany.

She spent three years there, including one year teaching fifth grade. Because she was at a NATO base, her students came from all over the world and had varied backgrounds which presented new teaching challenges. She also met and married her husband there, and in 1973 he was transfered to Ft. Monroe and Kathy began teaching in Newport News.

"I was really happy and excited to be placed in a downtown school, because I had never had an inner city experience," she recalls. "But the adjustment was really difficult. I just assumed that at certain ages children knew certain things. But they don't. Once during lunch a child was eating his vegetables with a spoon and I asked him to please use his fork. He looked puzzled and picked up his knife."

She is quick to add that she has encouraged her students to take what they have and build from there and to emphasize the positive. "It's kind of corny, but we took the word 'American' and said that it ends with 'I can,' and we developed that philosophy. Nobody in our room says 'I can't.' It's really important that they reach for the stars. True, they might not get one, but by golly, they're not going to come up with a handful of mud."

She considers herself extremely lucky to have had three totally different teaching experiences and feels that all have contributed greatly to improving her abilities as a teacher.

"I honestly have to say that my experiences in Newport News have been the most exciting to me as a teacher and the most rewarding. In New York, the students I taught would probably have learned in spite of the teacher. In the situation I'm in now, they learn because of you."

In response to her recent honor, Kathy shrugs modestly and says the honor really shouldn't go to her. "You're nothing without your students. You have to have those children to teach. I need them as much as they need me, and we learn from each other."

She also points out that she has an aide who works wonders in the classroom, a school administration that provides flexibility and encourages teachers to try new things, and a group of colleagues including a terrific reading consultant who all share ideas and solutions, even to the point of loaning older students to help teach younger ones.

Kathy is also active in the Newport News Council of the International Reading Association and has been instrumental in obtaining nearly 100 per cent membership at Newsome Park. She exchanges many ideas with other members of the council.

"I certainly don't have all the right answers," she says. "But I do devote a lot of time to teaching because it's the only way I know how to teach. I happen to have a cooperative husband who loves these students as much as I do."

* * *

If you are not a member of VSRA but would like very much to join, why not send your name, address (please include zip code) and school position along with $2.00 to:

Mrs. Anne Henry
506 - 27th Street
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451

Please make all checks payable to the Virginia State Reading Association.

MARJORIE L. LEE
NORFOLK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
VSRA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Mrs. Susan Matthews
Norfolk Reading Council
Norfolk, Virginia

Marjorie believes that there is no one best way to teach reading. Therefore her teaching of reading is a composite of several methods. She team teaches with two other fourth grade teachers. This year she is working with children in Levels nine, ten, and eleven in Ginn 360. Marjorie has her classroom divided into three areas, according to levels. Each group has a chart that shows the schedule for their group. In this way, the children develop independence and self-reliance. For some children visual activities may be used, whereas other children may need auditory help. She readily notes where help is needed and plans new lessons which will provide the practice necessary for a successful reading lesson the next time she meets the children. She provides phonetic instruction when it is needed, and she stresses comprehension skill development when it becomes apparent that the pupils are merely reading words.

She says that the basal reader actually is a key to learning, but she advises her pupils to extend their reading experiences by reading in many different kinds of books during their home reading period. The home reading program is one which was developed in Norfolk in an attempt to gain parental involvement.

Marjorie Langley Lee, a native Norfolkian, attended elementary school and graduated from high school in Norfolk, Virginia. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Norfolk State College and her Master of Science degree in Education from Old Dominion University. Since graduation she has done advanced study in administration at Old Dominion University.

She is the proud mother of one son, Michael Antonio Lee.

Marjorie began her teaching career in September, 1963 at Robert E. Lee Elementary School. She has also taught at Ballentine Elementary School and is presently a 4th grade teacher at Liberty Park Elementary. At Liberty Park School she is grade level chairman, a member of the advisory committee, P.T.A. committee, and cafeteria committee.

She readily points out that often the value of practice work is underrated by many. However, she has found that a large proportion of the student's time should be given to this type of work. For example in the area of vocabulary building, her able students make up riddles which may be answered with their new words, while their less able counterparts produce sets of flash cards using their new words. Then on proceeding days the students would employ their words to construct imaginative news headlines, cartoon captions, or television commercials. The children also participate in a school-wide uninterrupted sustained silent reading time daily.

Reflecting back, Marjorie points out that success in reading for many pupils depends upon the development of a liking for the art of reading as a method of gaining information about areas of special concern or interest to the individual. She stressed that frequently, hobbies or interests in animals make good starting points.

Marjorie says that "Good teaching must be vivid and memorable." Therefore she adds dramatization in her reading lessons.

In discussing curricular reading, Marjorie said, "When children read in special subject fields I feel my role is still that of a reading teacher, because children will not achieve desired goals unless they can apply their reading skills to the special skills associated with the subject." Because of these beliefs, she has designed several activity and interest centers to build content vocabulary. She also includes language master activities for those children who are non-readers.

In talking with Marjorie Lee's students, these were some of their views and feelings:

"Mrs. Lee is a very nice teacher. She helps me with the words I can't pronounce. The best thing is the fifteen minutes of silent reading."

"Mrs. Lee talks to us in our Language Arts block. She tells us how to do our work. One time we tried to do our work alone, but we couldn't do it without Mrs. Lee."

"I love Mrs. Lee because she helps me."

"I like Mrs. Lee because she lets you read when you want to. I also like her because she helps you with words. She takes her time to try to help me read."

"Mrs. Lee is a very good teacher. She always explains things when we don't understand. I like her very much."

H.E.L.P. - HOME EDUCATION LEARNING POWER

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Reviewing the findings of the most recent Gallup Poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools, it is not surprising to note that parents, like educators, are concerned about declining test scores. However, it is surprising that parents are not blaming the schools for this decline, but are placing the burden upon themselves. Public concern is so great that 77% of the sampled population - including parents and non-parents - supported public school courses where parents could learn how to help their children succeed in school.

I can substantiate these findings. This year in Fairfax County, Virginia, I have been working with administrators and teachers to design and implement alternative methods, materials, and programs for the Academically Unsuccessful Student. Administrators and teachers in all of the schools seem to be saying the same thing. These students need MORE - more time, more attention, more skill reinforcement - more than we can give them. If we could only tap the educational gold mine that exists in every home and expand the educational team to include parents as a vital component, these children could get more. How can we equip parents to faciliate learning in the home - to expand the 2 x 4 learning theory; the theory that learning only takes place between the two covers of a book and the four walls of a classroom? Administrators, teachers, and parents are asking for help, but more importantly our children need it.

In response to this cry for help, I have offered H.E.L.P. - Home Education Learning Power. H.E.L.P. consists of materials and strategies for parents designed to:

1. help them understand the complex and difficult process of learning a symbol system; the symbols being words and numbers;
2. focus on the vital role they can play in helping their children achieve;
3. view the home as a learning resource;
4. familiarize them with instructional strategies using free and/or inexpensive materials found in the home.

These objectives are reached via a workshop approximately one and one-half hours in length. The workshop begins with an activity designed to heighten their awareness of the symbolization process and the difficult and oftentimes frustrating experiences their children might have learning how to read or how to manipulate numbers. They are given time to process this activity through small group discussions. The second phase of the workshop addresses itself to the often-asked questions: "We know our child needs help, but what can we do to improve our child's chance for success in school? Not being trained teachers, couldn't we do more harm than good?" Hands-on materials and instructional strategies using newspapers, magazines, menus, maps, telephone directories, credit card applications, sponges, catalogues, travel brochures, food containers, and department store advertisement brochures are shared. Parents are encouraged to suggest variations or additional activites that they have found successful. Time for brainstorming new activities is allotted.

"We know our child needs help, but what can we do to improve our child's chance for success in school?

The workshop has been enthusiastically received both by parents and educators. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and so has encouraged me to begin thinking about follow-up activities, perhaps, a make'n'take session, home visits, a handbook for parents or additional idea exchange sessions.

It is still to early to see the impact on student acheivement from this concerted effort between parents and teachers. But I can only feel that any time we offer our students M.O.R.E. - Many Others Reinforcing Education, it has to help.